DELIVERED

From the struggle with God

When the light of God's word penetrates,

the struggle between man and God ends!!!

Minister L. Khumalo

THE GREAT CALL MINISTRIES & Camp Ministry

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Delivered from the struggle with God

By Minister Khumalo (2023)

Dedication

I would like to dedicate this book to all who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and are chosen according to God's purpose to receive God's grace and forgiveness of sins through our Lord Jesus the Son of God. Also I dedicate this book to my lovely wife who has been with me through thick and thin and is still willing to stay with me until all that the Lord has promised us is revealed. Babe this is especially for you, just to remind you of your Father's love. Finally, I dedicate this book to my family, the Camp Ministry. You all are a true blessing and I love all of you very much.

Minister L. Khumalo

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God has graciously given me many brothers and sisters who have become very dear to me. I cannot think of how my life would have turned out if I had not met Apostle Luthando Bhengu, the founder and the leader of Camp Ministry. Without the support of the Camp ministry this book would not have been written. Shongololo my good sir, words will fail me to thank you and the entire Camp Ministry. You have made life bearable and showed me a kind of support that is priceless. Sis Thembokuhle Nxumalo, your obedience to God and your kindness towards me made the writing of this book successful, thank you so much.

Pastor Andrew Pakkies, my good sir – I love you. Thank you for leading me to the Lord and for laying a foundation in my life and my calling. I have not met many with boldness such as you have. You are one of my heroes and history has it that you served the Lord through serving us. May the Lord strengthen your hand and fill your heart always with his love. Your obedience to the Lord's call produced this book. Thank you sir.

Another wonderful soul that God sent to save my life is Xoliswa Muhale who took me in as her own child when life was giving it to me harder. She encouraged and strengthened my hand and I learned a lot from her. You are appreciated Mah.

My father Bishop K.W Magagula, Ndumiso Dlalisa, Dumolwakhe Bhane, Senzeko Mathe, Fundiswa Mayeza, thank you for the constant love and support I receive from you. Apostle Thokozani and Prophet Mash Madolo, thank you for the encouragement and the support. And finally, my Lord Jesus Christ, my closest friend, I am nothing without you and there is nothing of any significance that I would ever achieve. Thank you Lord.

Foreword

Except a person understands fully their purpose or understands their reason for existence, everything God does will remain without value in their sight and that is where the struggle begins. Unless a believer is delivered from their struggle, they will remain bound as they do not fully grasp their victory in God through Jesus Christ.

In ***Delivered from struggle with God,*** you will be propelled to seeking a love relationship with God, not only because it is what He created you for, but so you could have a meaningful impact or contribution to His territory through your life as you lean on the embrace of His acceptance of you "in spite of you". The love of God transcends all fears and all bondages, and this book is just about that, seeking to deliver the body of Christ from all fears and bondages, consequently establishing a generation for Jesus Christ.

We met Minister Lindokuhle Khumalo through Camp Ministry through their Matatiele outreach. Minister Khumalo is an incredible teacher of the word of God, and when He unpacks the word, He brings Jesus Christ to the center of the room, illuminating the heart of every person under the sound of his voice. This book will compel your heart to change, and when your heart changes, even circumstances around you change. God indeed wanted relationship with His people, hence He said, "let us make man in our own image and our likeness." For the "Lord takes pleasure in His people; He adorns the humble with salvation" Psalms 149:4.

Thokozani & Mash Madolo

Introduction

Our first deliverance is from enmity with God. God delivers us from his wrath and from the struggle that we had with him in trying to earn his mercy. Some people who don't understand that the struggle is over, still try through their prayers, to cry from the depth of their hearts to God, hoping he will see their sincerity and have pity on them, and maybe pardon their sins. Some use this technique when they are hoping to receive something from God through prayer – they beg him with tears. They hope that the all compassionate God will be compassionate enough toward them and grant them their requests out of pity.

Little do they understand that God has already been compassionate toward them, and with his great love has loved them dearly, far deeper than they can understand. Some quote many scriptures in prayer hoping that they would quote just about enough for God to be moved. They think that perhaps God has forgotten his promises and need a reminder. Some think they can push him through his word and show him that he really need to do what he promised. They are in a struggle with God.

I didn't have a good teaching of the gospel when I converted to Christianity. I was taught that God demanded obedience and if you fail, you will go straight to hell, even if you have died as a Christian. To make it worse, I was told that you don't go to the part of hell where sinners go, but you go to the center of hell where the fire is burning with seven colors. I was not taught the simple gospel of the grace of God and the gift of righteousness. I worked for my righteousness every day of my life because I did not want to go to hell. I was so terrified by it that I started using it as a motivation to love God and it just didn't work.

You cannot serve God motivated by fear because God is love. Perfect love casts out all fear. The very essence of God casts fear out. If you are still serving God out of fear then you have not been made perfect in love and you are still engaged in a struggle with God that the Lord Jesus ended before you were even born through the cross. You do not know

God if you do not know his dear love. My prayer is that you will be delivered from the struggle through this book.

As long as you do not have rest and peace in the righteousness that is from God, and have to provide your own righteousness in order for God to be pleased with you, you are walking in great defeat. You will always feel like you are walking right in the very edge of hell, always at the brink of falling into the abyss. If your salvation is not a burden of Christ, then everything else in your life will be your burden. Even prayer and studying the word will be a burden. You will do it as an obligation and a requirement to keep you from hell fires.

This book is written to help deliver you from your burden and struggle with God through the most basic and foundational truths about your salvation. Without knowing these truths, you will walk bound and defeated by the devil all of your days, and you will never know the true joy of your salvation, neither will you ever understand God's love for you in its depth.

Chapter One

Relationship

The ultimate purpose

Understanding the purpose of a thing makes it valuable and appreciated for its purpose. Unfortunately, a thing is worthless until it has been recognized as having a purpose. Man's value to God cannot be understood until we first understand why God created man. For what purpose did he create him? What did he lose when man fell into sin and death? In order to understand and appreciate man's salvation, we need to first understand the reason why God saved us. What are the reasons that the scriptures give? What did we need saving from? And what really did it cost God to save us?

The answers to these questions hinge on the reason behind our creation – our purpose. For what purpose did we come to existence? The great struggle between man and God comes from ignorance and the misconceptions that man has about God. There is a lot of confusion about who God is and what his personality is like. The most basic questions like why we were created, have been left unanswered to many. No wonder there's such a great struggle between man and God. Allow me therefore to be as simple as I possibly can in answering the primary questions behind our existence.

Why were we created?

Let us begin by looking at the reason why we were created. I know very well that everyone has a calling, and that may even be the first thing that comes into many people's minds whenever they encounter this question. But in all honesty, your vocation cannot be the primary reason why you were created. Your calling is valid, and I take nothing away from that, but I am saying that it is not the primary or the core reason why you were created.

If your vocation is in medicine, do not even for a second think that God looked down from the heaven of heavens and decided that he will create the earth and man because he wanted to create doctors. In God's perfect plan there wasn't even a need for a doctor. Nobody was sick and sickness did not exist, therefore, God could have not created you primarily for medicine.

I am called by the Lord Jesus Christ to teach the body of Christ, to plant churches, to write books and to do many other things for the sake of the body of Christ. But did you know that this was not going to be necessary if Adam did not fall into sin? There was not going to be a need for a preacher and there was not going to be a need for a doctor, because without sin there was not going to be anyone sick and everyone would know the Lord.

Man was not created for worship

I have heard many people saying that God can do all things but he cannot worship himself, and for this reason he created man so that man will worship him. I think that the people who make such claims don't have a good understanding of the character of God, and I think they don't understand the purpose of worship. God is selfless and there is nothing that God requires from man that benefits only God, not even worship. One of the reasons why I cannot agree with this thinking that God created man primarily for worship is because, there are myriads of angels that worship God without ceasing, and the angels were created first and then man. The angels were singing for joy when God created the earth (see Job 38:4-7). They were already worshipping him.

Do you think the reason why God created man was because he needed more entities worshipping him? No he didn't. You were not created for the purpose of worship. Worshipping God is part of what you do, and worshipping is necessary but worshipping cannot be the primary purpose you were created for. God delights in your worship, but he delights more in you than in what you do for him. Because of the relationship that you have with God, he accepts your worship but apart from that relationship, God does not delight in your worship. Relationship supersedes worship.

Man was not created for vocation

Imagine if the world remained perfect as God intended it to be, just how many people would be out of jobs and just how many people will lose their purpose? If your sole purpose for existence is serving, what will become of you when God rid creation of all sin and corruption, and when everything is back to perfection and your service is no longer necessary? Who would you intercede for in a perfect world?

Who would you preach to when the Lord is right before every one of us? To whom would you perform surgery when nobody is sick? The reason why God created us therefore cannot be found in our vocation. Our calling is what we contribute to this world as God's stewards, but many of our vocations were not even required in the

perfect world in which we were created, and they won't be required in the life hereafter.

God serves man more

Adam was created in a perfect world. What did God need from him? God did not create him because he was in need. God created man because he fell in love with man even before he created him, and he was concerned more with serving man than being served by man. There is not much that you do for God. Think about it. When man and woman were created, everything they needed was ready for them – they were already served. God prepared everything they would need and more.

He immediately gave them a kingdom to run. He gave them power to govern the earth and he blessed them. What did he ask for in return that was going to benefit him? Do we have a recorded command where God commanded Adam to worship him? Did he ask Adam to help him with anything? No!

The instructions that were given to Adam and Eve, were given them for their benefit and I assure you that if they needed help, God was there for them just as he is for us. What do we ever do for God? He does everything for us and still gives us the credits for it. That is just the nature of God. God loves serving. This was a consistent attribute of the Lord Jesus Christ during his earthly ministry, and it still is even now. Jesus is God and he is the perfect representation of God the Father.

David wrote in his psalm under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit;

> **"You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies..."**
> **– Psalm 23:5 ESV**

The scriptures are bold to say that the Lord prepares a table. Whose job is it to prepare tables, servants or lords? Well, God Almighty is so humble and lowly in heart that he prepares a table for his servants. He calls them friends. Jesus did the same thing for his disciples (see John 13). What I am trying to show you here is that God loves you dearly and he really is doing much more for you than what you think you do for him. He did not create you for service.
The scriptures call the Holy Spirit, your Helper, and what do you ever do for the Holy Spirit? Every day of your life, the Holy Spirit is always ready to serve you, to teach you, to guide you, and he is very patient with your stubborn and hardened unbelieving heart. With all patience he serves you relentlessly and with all compassion he comforts you without fail. God knew all the trouble you will put him through –the death of his Son– before he even created you, but still he created you, despising all the trouble and the pain you will cause him because he loved you.

Before the foundations of the earth

The scriptures are not silent about the plans of God regarding man, the plans that God had even before the earth was created *(see Ephesians 1:4-5)*. It is clear therefore that man existed in the plan of God before the earth existed and God created the earth how he did, because he already knew how he was going to make man. The earth was tailor-made for man.

God gave man instructions on things to do but these cannot be presumed to be man's purpose. You were not created for instructions, instructions were created for you. You were created to be in relationship with God and relationship requires that you serve God. But if you try to serve God without relationship you are reduced to a slave of God, whose purpose is serving. God does not appreciate that kind of service because he does not require it. God is not a slaver.

God is not interested in slaves who serve him just so they would make it to heaven or receive his blessing. God wants man to have relationship with him and serve him out of love. The serving that God delights in is a kind that is a requirement for relationship not a requirement for making it to heaven.

God's purpose portrayed by man's structure

By looking at how man was formed, you can tell that man was created for God. The structure after which man was made makes it clear that God created man for relationship. Let us look at the structure of man so that I may show you a few things. Scriptures show that man is composed of 3 parts:

> **Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole <u>spirit</u> and <u>soul</u> and <u>body</u> be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.**
> **1Thessalonians 5:23 ESV (emphasis added)**

Spirit :

- Communion
- Conscience
- Intuition

Soul :

- Emotions
- Thoughts
- Will/volition

Body :

- Man's physical structure
- Realm of the five senses – Taste
  - Sight
  - Smell
  - Hearing
  - Sense/touch

I want us to focus our study on the spirit of man, because this is the part in man that was created to be filled with God. When you look at the functions of each of the faculties of the spirit you will clearly understand that man's spirit was created for relationship with God. Even though I will not delve deep into details in explaining the functions of the spirit, I still intend to give just a simple enough explanation that you may understand just the point I am establishing.

Spirit = Communion + Intuition + Conscience

Communion

Spirit's communion is the part of your spirit through which you commune with God. This faculty of your spirit lets you know the feelings of God without him communicating them to you through words. This faculty of your spirit suggests that you were created to commune with God. In the new birth (after receiving Christ Jesus), God gives you the Holy Spirit to dwell in your spirit –I will explain this in details later. Through the Holy Spirit you get to know him, to know his thoughts and everything about him. God actually gives you access to his mind.

> **"These things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God that we might understand the things freely given us by God."**
> **- 1Corinthians 2:10-12 ESV**

If you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and are born again, then you have the Holy Spirit dwelling inside of you and you have access to the mind of God. You have the mind of Christ.

> **"For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ. - 1Corinthians 2:16 ESV**

Yes, you have access to the mind of God. If Adam had not fallen into sin, you were going to have this mind of Christ from birth. There was never going to be a need for

the renewal of your mind in order to align it with the mind of your spirit, because the Devil would not have had a chance to corrupt your mind in the first place. But praise be to the Lord! Even after we fell into sin, God still gives us access to his mind through the scriptures and the Holy Spirit whom we receive at salvation, when we believe and confess Jesus as our Lord and Savior.

Intuition

This is a part of your spirit through which you receive knowledge from God in a form of revelation knowledge. Those who have prophetic gifts receive their prophetic messages through intuition. This is the part through which you receive lessons from the Holy Spirit, this is where the voice of God speaks to you. Your intuition receives directly from God's Spirit through your spirit. Because God created you to be one with him, he also designed your spirit to allow him communication. What makes it hard today to discern the voice of God is the flesh. But before sin, there was no confusion.

The Lord Jesus, in his prayer that is recorded in the book of John chapter 17, reveals God's longing and desire to be one with man.

> **"I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one, just as you Father are in me, and I in you, they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given to me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one. I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me."**
>
> **- John 17:20-23 ESV (emphasis added)**

The longing and desire of God is to be one with man even as God in trinity is One. God wants to have with man, the relationship that the Godhead has. He invites us to unbroken fellowship with the Father, the Son and the Spirit. This is what we were created for primarily. Our creation only makes perfect sense when you look at it through the lenses of the love of God. Even your calling will make sense when you have understood this basic truth.

Conscience

Many Christians today are very confused regarding this faculty of their spirit, mainly because they don't understand how it functions. Man's conscience relies on the knowledge that the man has in order to function. This faculty was working perfectly before the fall of man. Remember that prior to the fall, even though man didn't have the knowledge of good and evil, he still had the knowledge of right and wrong, and I believe that this was the function of man's conscience. Man was

supposed to know or perceive through their conscience what was right or wrong to do before they act aright or amiss.

This faculty is supposed to give man God's guidance. But unfortunately, in many born again Christians, it is now working as their personal enemy and the very thing that separates them from God. This happens because man now has the knowledge of good and evil. This is the only part of man that had to be sprinkled by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ to cleanse it from dead works because it kept man from serving God (see *Hebrews 9:14).* Man must have a sound teaching of the gospel because of this very reason that a defiled conscience can still separate man from God and ruin the relationship between God and man. This device in human spirit has been mistaken by many to be the Holy Spirit.

Summing up

We establish that man was created for relationship out of love. He was given duties not as reason for his existence but as his contributions to his territory. Through looking at how man was created and the love with which God loves man, we conclude that indeed man was created for relationship. Through looking at the functions of the spirit we conclude that man was created to have a Spirit to spirit relationship with God. God created man to be one with him. He created him for love.

Today God is still seeking an intimate relationship with mankind. Before you can even serve him, God requires a relationship first. He does not accept service from those who do not have relationship with him through Jesus Christ. And those who are in Christ who seek to serve him, cannot serve him unless they first establish a close relationship with him.

Primarily, you were created for relationship and therefore, relationship comes first before anything. The reason why God saved you is because he is still interested in that relationship. God has not given up on you. You are still loved dearly and desired.

Chapter Two

Sold to slavery

God's purpose thwarted

Man's obedience to sin – to the author of sin (Satan) – led to the many problems that we see today. Unfortunately, many of these tragedies are blamed to God. God created man for himself but he still gave man free will, so that man would choose God out of his own discretion and not just by default. When man tries to live independent of God everything goes haywire. When man tries to be self-dependent or find other sources instead of God to depend on, things go amiss. And this is the tragedy of our kind; we want to be self-dependent and we mess things up and only remember God when we are deep in trouble.

Back at the Garden of Eden when there was just Adam and Eve is where it all started. I would assume that you are familiar with the story of the fall of man, so I will not go into details with it. What I want you to understand, however, is that this is where man traded his rights with the devil. Through obeying the serpent, man surrendered his rights to Satan and was immediately separated from God.

> **"Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned – " - Romans 5:12 ESV**

There are few things that I want you to note as we look at this scripture. The word "sin" and "death" have a different meaning in this text than what we know of them. The word "sin" can mean at least three things in the scriptures. Let us look at these three possible meanings of the word sin.

Sin

1. Sin – an act

Sin can refer to the act of sinning. When a woman who was caught in the very act of adultery was brought to the Lord Jesus for judgment, the Lord told the woman after saving her from a sure death, *"Neither do I condemn you, go and from now on sin no more"* (see John 8:11). The word *"sin"* here refers to the act.

2. **Sin – corrupt/sinful nature**

The word "sin" can also speak of the corrupt nature of man that Adam inherited when he obeyed the Devil and disobeyed God. This is the nature that causes you to be powerless to sin because it is controlled by sin (the Devil).

> **"And you were dead in trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience –" - Ephesians 2:1-2 ESV**

The words, *"the spirit that is now at work…"* can be translated as "sin" because they refer to the power of Satan that is at work in everyone who is not born again. This can be called sin/sinful nature or the spirit who is at work in us for evil – the spirit of this world.

3. **Sin – Satan (the author of sin)**

Finally, sin can be used to refer to the author of sin which is Satan. When you obey sin, you obey Satan because to commit sin is to gratify the desires of Satan – the spirit at work in your flesh. Originally when you were created, you had no desire to sin. The desire originated from the Devil and he enticed Eve to carry out his desire and Eve yielded to sin/Satan's desire.

Now in light of all that, let us look at our text again.

> **"Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned – " - Romans 5:12 ESV**

Satan came into the world through one man. Sin – that originated with Satan – couldn't enter the world without Adam allowing it. There was no sin in Adam and if Adam resisted the Devil, sin would not have entered Adam's realm. But Adam chose to do something that he didn't even desire and transgressed God's command. Adam acted as a slave. He gave himself to slavery. He submissively gratified the desire of another that was directly opposed to his own desire and contrary to his nature.

True disobedience

> **"And Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor." 1Timothy 2:14 ESV**

Adam was not deceived like Eve, why then did he eat? I presume he did it because of his love for Eve. Adam knew the truth and he knew exactly what was going to happen to them. He knew what would happen to Eve who had eaten of the tree, and Adam chose to die with his wife. The action of Eve can be excused for deception but there is no excuse for Adam's act because he was not deceived. His act was direct

disobedience to God and direct obedience to the Devil and he knew it. He acted soberly free from deceit.

> **"So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate."**
> **- Genesis 3:6 ESV**

Adam had no desire for the fruit, neither did he see that the fruit was good for food and that it was to be desired to make one wise. These happened to Eve as a result of deception and they could not have been true to Adam who was not deceived. When Adam saw the fruit of that tree, he saw nothing but death. What was true to Eve was not to Adam because only one of them was deceived. Adam was in his sound mind when he traded the world for nothing. He became a willing slave to Satan.

Rule of slavery

> **"Do you not know that when you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin which leads to death, or of obedience which leads to righteousness? - Romans 6:16 ESV**

This is the law in the spirit through which Adam and his seed was confined to the power of sin (Satan). He obeyed sin and became a slave to sin which led to his death – separation from God. *I will explain briefly in a short while, what the word death can be used to reference in different scriptures.*

It is as rule of slavery that everything a slave owns belongs to their master. Slaves don't have citizenship rights, they only have the rights given to them by their masters. A slave is a property of his master and whatever labor he does, the payment will go to his master, if he is to be paid for that labor. A slave has no life of his own and he cannot have goals of his own. If he sets goals he will still be deprived by his master of an opportunity to fulfill those goals. If he succeeds in his goals, all his accomplishments and achievements will be attributed to his master. A slave only has to fulfill the goals of his master or fulfill his own goals at his masters' approval.

When a slave gives birth to children, they will be called after his masters' last name because they too belong to his master. The Lord Jesus once said to the Jews, **"You are of your father the Devil..."** – John 8:44 ESV. This he said because they were only born of Adam and belonged to the Devil. A slave owner has a right to punish his slave. And a slave who tries to escape commits a crime punishable by death. The only way out of slavery is death or redemption. A slave will remain in his master's house until somebody pays a ransom for their release.

Everyone who is born of Adam is born into slavery. The devil has power over them until they appropriate the sacrifice – the ransom that was paid for their release. The devil is their god by default because of Adam's sin. The ransom has been paid, however, they still need to appropriate it as a sign of accepting release.

The corrupt nature

"And you were dead in trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience – among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath like the rest of mankind." - Ephesians 2:1-3 ESV

The spirit that is spoken about here, is the spirit of Satan who is also called the prince of this world. The scripture says that we were all children of wrath by *nature*. This means that, sin was so entwined with our nature when we were born, and we were so dominated by it that we were by *nature* destined for the wrath of God. We belonged to the devil, we were enslaved by him and we were destined for wrath like he is. Our very nature was corrupted by sin from birth.

The god of this world

"Even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God." - 1Corinthians 4:3-4 ESV

Why does the bible call Satan the god of this world? It does so because he has obtained legal right over those who choose him through obeying sin. The first one to give him such right and dominion was Adam. As I mentioned earlier, man was created with no desire to sin. Rebellion came with Satan. It originated in him, not in man. Sin came into this world from Satan – who is the author of it, through Adam obeying sin and disobeying God.

God, when he redeemed man, he condemned – confined – sin in the flesh, so that there will be no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus who walk after the

spirit. In the following chapters we will look at this in close detail so that we can understand what it really means.

Sinner by default

> **"Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all man because all man sinned – For sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was the type of the one to come."**
>
> **- Romans 5:12-14 ESV**

Because of Adam's sin, all his children became sinners by default. They were born separated from the life of God. Sin had dominion over all of them just as I explained briefly the rule of slavery. Death – separation from God – reigned from Adam to Moses (The Law giver) even over those who did not sin by transgressing a positive command like Adam did. Adam's sinning was deliberate because he was not deceived and there was no power of sin working in him.

When he sinned he was a perfect man filled with the life of God and he had never tasted sin nor temptation. He was not enticed to sin through deception. His wife simply gave him the fruit, and he ate. Because of his disobedience, sin had dominion over him and over all his children – all of mankind. Look at the below scripture:

> **"For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience many will be made righteous." - Romans 5:19 ESV**

Death

Disobedience led to death, and death was not God's primary plan. Earlier I mentioned that death can hold different meanings in the scriptures depending on the context under which the word is used. Let us look at that briefly.

1. Death – departure/sleep

Death can imply departure or physical death. Sometimes the word "sleep" would be used instead of death. An example of this can be found in the book of John chapter 11, in the story of the Lord Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead, after he had been dead for 4 days, and also in Paul's letter to the believers in Thessalonica touching resurrection.

> **"The disciples said to him, "Lord if he sleeps, he will recover." Now Jesus had spoken of his death but they thought he meant taking rest in sleep. Then he told them plainly, "Lazarus has died." – John 11:13-14 ESV**
>
> **"But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers concerning those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others who have no hope." – 1Thessalonians 4:13 ESV**

2. Death – separation from God

Death is sometimes used to denote separation from God. God told Adam that on the day he eats of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil he will surely die. What death was he talking about?

> **And the Lord God commanded man saying, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die." - Genesis 2:16-17 ESV**

We all know that Adam did not immediately die physically on the day he ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. He was very much alive when God came to the garden later that same day, so alive that he even ran away and hid from God. The question then arises, I suppose, "Did God say they would die on that same day just to threaten them, but it wasn't true?"

God did not lie and God cannot lie because He is the truth. They really died on that day. Death in this sense denotes *separation from God* and being permeated by sin – which cannot be separated from death and corruption. Separation from God resulted to the corruption of our very beings and the corruption of our desires and emotions. It resulted in sickness and disease, body defects and deformities, it corrupted our imagination, and our thinking. Through death, corruption permeated every sphere of our being.
When man attained to the knowledge of both good and evil, evil overcame him. The spirit of the prince of this world dominated man and had control of him instead of the Spirit of God. There was a change of ownership when man chose sin and rejected God. Even if you are alive today, if you are separated from Christ – the life of God – in your spirit, then you are dead.

> **"Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart." - Ephesians 4:17-18 ESV**

Christ is the Life of God and life comes from God alone. Christ is the only source of life. The Lord Jesus told his disciples that he is the way, the truth and the LIFE. Being alive and having Life are different things, and that is the point I am making here.

Those who reject the Lord Jesus Christ are "*alienated* – foreigners and separated – *from the life of God.*" They may be alive for a hundred years but because they are separated from Christ, they are dead to God. They are alive only to the devil their master.

> **"For the death he died, he died to sin once for all, but the life he lives, he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus."**
> **- Romans 6:10-11 ESV**

In the passage in which the above scripture text was extracted, we see a law that, what is dead to God is alive to sin (Satan) and what is dead to sin (Satan) is alive to God. Therefore, death is a separation from God in this context. I think I have deliberated this point enough for everyone to understand.

3. Death – eternal separation from God

And finally, death, can denote eternal separation from God. This can refer to the place of the dead or it can refer to the eternal separation from God after a person has departed not having believed on the Lord Jesus Christ. Because after death comes judgment, then when a person passes having not believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, they can be saved no longer and therefore, they are separated from God for all eternity. This is called death after you have died.

> **"And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne and the books were opened. Then another book was opened which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done. And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done"**
> **- Revelation 20:12-13 ESV**

As I have already mentioned, once a person dies without accepting salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ, they are separated from God forever and can no longer be redeemed. Such people wait for their judgment in Hades or Death. In the above passage we are told that on judgment day, Death and Hades will release the dead who are in them. The reason why it is said that they are dead, is to denote that they are separated from God forever.

God sent his Son Jesus Christ to redeem us from death, so that through him we might have life and have it in abundance. God's will and desire for every one of us is that we receive his gift of life through believing the gospel and receiving the Lord Jesus Christ. Salvation is totally free and given to us as a gift to be received through faith. In the coming chapters I will explain this in more details. There is no reason for anyone to be separated from God for all eternity. The penalty for our sins was paid

and we were reconciled to God. No one will be rejected by God if they receive his mercy and appropriate their salvations through believing on the Lord Jesus Christ.

To sum up therefore, there are three forms of death that I mentioned.

- Death - prior to being born again
- Physical death
- And eternal death that comes after physical death to those not born of God.

Sin introduced death and death thwarted the purpose of God in creating man. God could no longer have a relationship with man. Glory and praise be unto Jesus through whom we have been restored into relationship and the love of God.

Chapter Three

The Law

Not a cure

When sin entered the world and enslaved man, God did not forsake his plans concerning man. God's love for man did not change even though man had become a vessel for the devil's use. God promised man a Savior instead of condemning him. He told Adam and Eve that **the seed of a woman would crush the head of the serpent (see Genesis 3:15)**, and for eons they waited. The prophets kept prophesying about his coming until the word became flesh and made his home among us (see John 1:14). The promised seed finally made it into our world and indeed he crushed the Serpent's head.

Before the promised seed could come, however, came first the Law. The Law was not the cure but a diagnosis. The subject of the law is a very sensitive topic for me, because I have seen how so many Christians have been consigned to a life of defeat and of failure by the Law. Yet the Law was not even given to the Christians in the first place. In this chapter therefore I intend to deliberate why the Law was added, and what negative impacts were that the perfect and holy law of God had on man because of his fallen nature. So let us begin by looking at why the Law was added and to whom was it given?

Why then the Law?

> **"Now we know that whatever the law says, it speaks to those who are under the Law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God." - Romans 3:19 ESV**

In the scripture above, we are told that the law *"…speaks to those who are under the law…"* and this is an implication that not everybody is under the law. The next thing that is said right after this, is that the law speaks, *"…so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world be held accountable to God."* This single scripture gives us the reason why the Law was given and shows us, to whom it was given. The law was given to make the whole world accountable/guilty before God.

The scriptures show us two people for whom the law was intended, and if the law is used in any other person except for these two groups, then the Law is being used unlawfully. This is important to understand before you use the Law. Let us look at the two groups for whom the law was laid down.

1. The people born under the Law

When the Law was first introduced, God gave the Law to the Israelites who came out of Egypt under the leadership of Moses, in Mount Sinai *(see Exodus 20)*. They were instructed on the Law and were told to teach the same to their children. God made a covenant with them when he gave them the Law, and the conditions of the covenant were that, those who observe the whole Law would receive God's blessing and they shall live through their obedience, but those under the covenant who would not be careful to observe and do all that is written in the book of the Law, would come under a curse and they shall die because of their disobedience *(See Deuteronomy 28).*

> **"See I have taught you statutes and rules, as the Lord my God commanded me, that you should do them in the land that you are entering to take possession of it. Keep them and do them for that will be your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples, who, when they hear all these statutes will say, "Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people" - Deuteronomy 4:5-6 ESV**

Note that, when the Law was given to the people of Israel, it was going to set them apart from the people who were not given the Law – the Gentiles. The Law was given only to the Israelites because of the covenant that they (only) had with God. From the day the Law was given, to this very day, it has been for the nation of Israel.

But there is another people that the scriptures give us permission to use the Law to, hence, it was given so that the whole world –*not just the nation of Israel*– may be held accountable to God. This people therefore are also under the Law and using the Law toward them is lawful.

2. Sinners and Law breakers

> **"Now we know that the law is good, if one uses it lawfully, understanding this, that the law is not laid for the just but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and the profane, for those who strike their fathers and mothers, for murderers, the sexually immoral, men who practice homosexuality, enslavers, liars, perjurers and whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine" - 1Timothy 1:8-10 ESV**

The above quoted purposely exclude *the just* from the Law. It expressly state that the Law is not laid for the just. Therefore using the Law on the just is unlawful, as the above passage suggests. The just shall live by faith **{see Romans 1:17}** and the just has been delivered from the curse of the Law **{see Galatians 3:13}**. They have died to the law through Christ Jesus **{see Romans 7:4-6}**, and to put them under the Law again will be treason against their King, who through his death set them free from the Law. The just are those who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and are born again.

The passage then goes on to describe the people for whom the Law is laid down **– the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and the profane, for those who strike their fathers and mothers, for murderers, the sexually immoral, men who practice homosexuality, enslavers, liars, perjurers and whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine.** The scriptures do this so that we will not confuse the order of things commanded by God and establish our own perverted order.

The impacts of the Law

When God gave the Law, he knew that it would have a negative impact but it was necessary for diagnosis. The Law points out the problem but it does not help solve it and indeed it cannot. It reveals a sickness – sin – in our nature, but it cannot cast that sin out of our beings in order to heal us. The Law is good for showing us our depravity but sadly, it only leaves us there. The purpose of the Law is to show us our need for a Savior.

> **"What then shall we say? That the Law is sin? By no means! Yet if it had not been for the Law, I would not have known sin. For I would not have known what is to covet if the Law had not said, "You shall not covet." - Romans 7:7 ESV**

> **"For by the works of the Law no human being will be justified in his** [God's] **sight, since through the Law comes the knowledge of sin." – Romans 3:20 ESV**

The Law couldn't solve the problem

If the Law could help solve the problem then salvation would have been by the Law. God would not have sent his Son to die for our sins had there been another way through which we could be redeemed from the power of sin. Unfortunately there wasn't and there still isn't another way.

"For God has done what the Law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh,"
- Romans 8:3 ESV

"Is the Law contrary to the promises of God? Certainly not! For if a Law had been given that could give life, then righteousness would indeed be by the law."
- Galatians 3:21 ESV

"I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness were through the Law, then Christ died for no purpose" **- Galatians 2:21 ESV**

The Law strengthened sin

The Law is Holy and it was intended for good and it accomplished that good, and later we had to be delivered from it. Because instead of helping us to overcome sin, the Law furthered our captivity. Sin seized an opportunity to strengthen its chain of bondage capitalizing on the Law.

"But sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, produced in me all kinds of covetousness. For apart from the law, sin lies dead. I was once alive apart from the law, but when the commandment came, sin came alive and I died. The very commandment that promised life proved to be death to me. For sin, seizing opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through it (through the commandment) killed me.
- Romans 7:8-11 ESV

"For we know that the Law is spiritual, but I am of flesh, sold under sin. For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate.
- Romans 7:14-15 ESV

"The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the Law." **– 1Corinthians 15:56 ESV**

The Law held us captive

The Law held us captive but now we are released from it so that we may serve in a *new way* which is not the law. Serving through the old way of the written code therefore will be considered to be rebellion to God and an insult against the sacrifice of Christ – which is a greater crime. Not only are we delivered from the Law, we are commanded to let go of the Law and serve in a new way – not of the written code.

"But now we are released from the Law, having died to that which held us captive, so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit and not in the old way of the written code."
– Romans 7:6 ESV

Our deliverance

It is important to understand what the scriptures say regarding the Law, because the enemy can still use the Law to take away our freedom. Many of the epistles of Paul were written to address this matter, so that the enemy is left with no weapon to use against us. God took away the tool that the devil used to accuse and to condemn us when he took away the law by nailing it to the cross. The scriptures are now bold to say that there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ and not under the law.

> **"There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."**
> **- Romans 8:1 ESV**

The scriptures are bold to say this because the record of our debt that stood against us with its legal demands has been taken away. The Law has been taken away, rendering Satan unable to accuse us. There cannot be a legal charge against us since there are no legal demands from the law anymore. The accuser has been cast out! Hallelujah!

> **"And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him [Christ], having forgiven us all our trespasses, by cancelling the record of debt that stood against us <u>with its legal demands</u>. This he took aside, nailing it to the cross. He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them in open shame, by triumphing over them in him [Christ]. – Colossians 2:13-15 ESV**

> **And you – being dead in the trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh – He made alive together with him, having forgiven you all the trespasses, having blotted out the handwriting in the ordinances that is against us, that was contrary to us, and he hath taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross; having stripped the principalities and the authorities, he made a shew of them openly – having triumphed over them in it. – Colossians 2:13-15 YLT**

Works of the Law failed

Salvation could not be obtained through the works of the Law and therefore Christ came and worked salvation for us. Trying to obtain salvation by one's own works is folly and it separates one from true salvation and the grace of God. In the coming chapters we will deliberate how salvation is obtainable only through faith in Christ. As for the Law, it was given only to show a problem and to make you condemned so that you may run to Christ for salvation.

> **"We ourselves are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners, yet we know that a person is not justified by the works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, So we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified." – Galatians 2:15-16 ESV**

> **"So too at the present time there is a remnant, chosen by grace. But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace.**
> **- Romans 11:5-6 ESV**

> **"For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing: it is a gift of God not a results of works, so that no one may boast."**
> **- Ephesians 2:8-9 ESV**

The Law was given for a time

> **Why then the law? It was added because of transgression, *until* the offspring** [Christ] **should come to whom the promises had been made, and it was put in place through angels by an intermediary. – Galatians 3:19 ESV**

The Law was given for a time, until Christ would come. The Law was temporary.

> **Now before faith came we were held captive under the Law, imprisoned until the coming faith would be revealed. So then, the Law was our guardian until Christ came in order that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian. – Galatians 3:23-25 ESV**

We are now delivered from the law, never to be enslaved by it ever again. Hallelujah!

Chapter Four

Redemption

Redemption: the act of purchasing back something previously sold

"He entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing eternal redemption."
- Hebrews 9:12 ESV

God's plan was thwarted when sin entered the world. The purpose of God in creating man was to have relationship with man and sin took that away from both God and man. Although the scriptures call Abraham the friend of God, that friendship would have been perfect only if there was no sin. God desired more intimacy with Abraham. Even though he was pleased with the friendship they had, God desired a Spirit to spirit relationship.

On the previous chapters we spoke about how everyone was sold to slavery by the disobedience of our forefather Adam, and how also, the law when it came, worked against us to worsen our oppression. In order to have the relationship that he desired with man, God had to redeem man from both sin and the law.

"For all who rely on the works of the Law are under a curse; for it is written, "Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them." - Galatians 3:10 ESV

The Law revealed a standard of righteousness that was required in order to be holy and perfect before God. And it demanded that you abide with every single ordinance scripted in the Book of the Law, which was impossible. Through the Law therefore came condemnation and curses. The end of the Law is death. Without adhering to the whole Law you cannot be redeemed from condemnation and death.

"For whoever keeps the whole Law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it." - James 2:10 ESV

The just requirement of the Law demanded that we die condemned, and the wages of sin is death. Christ redeemed us from the curses of the law and from death that came through sin. He became sin so that we might become the righteousness of God.

"Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law by becoming a curse for us – for it is written; "Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree." - Galatians 3:13 ESV

"For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God." – 2Corinthians 5:21 ESV

"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned – every one – to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all." – Isaiah 53:6 ESV

Christ redeemed us through taking our place. He had no sin and had never known what sin was like but God made him to be sin for our sake. All the wrath of God against sin fell upon the perfect Christ who has never sinned, so that those who have done nothing but sin may receive forgiveness and deliverance from the power and the dominion of sin. Christ Jesus paid a ransom for our release and set us free from all curses.

Redeemed from the curses of the Law

"Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law by becoming a curse for us – for it is written; "Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree." – Galatians 3:13 ESV

In the book of Deuteronomy, on the 28th chapter, recorded are the blessings that were to come upon those who would abide in the whole law to do *everything* written therein, and also all the curses that will fall upon those who will fail to abide with the whole law to do *everything* written therein. Please read this chapter for yourself. The curses included poverty, confusion, frustration, pestilences, oppression, barrenness, sickness, death etc. and Christ redeemed us from all those.

There is absolutely no sickness that comes from God and there is no godly poverty. Christ died that we may be set free from these. If God would again inflict us with these, then that means Christ died in vain. God does not permit these tragedies into our lives, neither does he orchestrate them for us. He delivered us from these through the death of his Son Jesus Christ. You have been redeemed from everything that you will find written in Deuteronomy 28:15-68 and it is the will of God that you prosper and be in good health.

Redeemed from Generational curses

"And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals; for you were slain and by your blood <u>you ransomed</u> people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth." - Revelation 5:9-10 ESV

The above scripture is a song sang in heaven praising the Lamb for the work that he accomplished for God. In the song they use the word "ransomed," and this is a very important word to understand for us to even catch a glimpse of what they are praising the Lord Jesus for in heaven. The reason why they are singing to him is because he ransomed people for God. In simple language, what did he do that made him praiseworthy?

Ransom: *money or price demanded for the return of the captured person.*
Ransomed: *reclaimed by payment of a ransom*

The Lord Jesus reclaimed you for God by payment of a ransom. He paid the price that was demanded for you to return to God. He ransomed or redeemed you for God from your:

Tribe

You were ransomed from your tribe, and this means that you are no longer liable for the rituals that they must observe because of the covenants made by your forefathers. Evil spirits cannot force you to observe tribal rituals anymore because you no longer identify with your tribe anymore. You have been released from those binding contracts and the curses that are associated with them.

A full price has been paid and you don't belong to your tribe anymore but to the kingdom of the Son of God. Prior to being born again the evil spirits had rights over you because of the contracts that were made by your for fathers with them. But now that you have been ransomed for God through the death of Christ, you are free!

Language and people

You have been redeemed from the sins committed by the people of your clan, the people of your language and the people among whom you live. What is common to people does not need to be common to you because you have been ransomed. There is no legal charge that can be brought against you, and no curse can justly fall upon you because of your people, because you have been ransomed for God.

You belong to a different kingdom and you are a citizen of a kingdom governed by another King. You live by a different code and are judged by different laws. God redeemed you from your people, and their sins are no longer your sins and therefore you cannot be cursed with them. There is no condemnation for you. You belong to God.

- **Nation**

And again you are released from the sins that are committed by your nation. When judgment would come against a nation, you will be exempted from that judgment because you don't belong to your nation anymore. You have been redeemed from the generational curses that are upon your nation because you were ransomed for God. God judged you in Christ and therefore the tragedies that the devil bring against nations should not be part of your reality. You can be exempted from those.

No Devil plays fair

However, the fact that you have been redeemed does not mean that the Devil will just let you go without a fight. Your ignorance can kill you. The devil uses ignorance to hold people in captivity. You must remember that the Devil is evil and he is not seeking at all to do justice for you. He seeks to violate your rights and to destroy you. God is the one seeking justice for you and he has given you legal rights and freedom. The Devil seeks to steal that from you and that is why God has given you armor and powerful weapons that would destroy the devil if you use them against him.

There are people who are walking under curses that are not justified. They are not supposed to be experiencing such curses and defeat, but because they are ignorant of their rights, and they don't know how to use the weapons given them to fight off the enemy, they are in bondage. Although I am now deviating from the subject, please indulge me for the sake of the deliverance of such people. Allow me to show you one of the scriptures that you must understand in order to wage good war.

Enforcing the Law

Because now you know the verdict of God and you know the laws that favor you, you must wage a good war. Your war is in the courts of heaven. I have used different bible translations in the scripture below to bring to you more clarity.

> **No weapon formed against thee prospereth, And every tongue rising against thee, In judgment thou condemnest. This [is] the inheritance of the servants of Jehovah, And their righteousness from me, an affirmation of Jehovah! - Isaiah 54:17 YLT**

> **No weapon that is fashioned against you shall succeed, and you shall refute every tongue that rises against you in judgment. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord and their vindication from me, declares the Lord. - Isaiah 54:17 ESV**

I want to focus on these words,
"And every tongue rising against thee, In judgment thou condemnest,"
And **"You shall refute every tongue that rises against you in judgment."**

Both the translations clearly portray the truth that you have to use your tongue to condemn or to refute every tongue that rises against you. The tongue that rises against you in judgment, is a tongue that brings accusations against you in the court of law. You must refute this tongue so that God the judge, will execute judgment in favor of you. He will give you justice speedily.

> **"I tell you, he [God] will give justice to them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?" – Luke 18:8 ESV**

The word refute means, to prove to be false or incorrect. This means that you have to prove the accusers to be wrong in bringing their accusations against you. You have to prove that they are wrong and that they stand condemned. Your defense is the word of God. You don't bring your own opinions on how you think things should be done, but you bring your constitutional rights and present your argument on the bases of what is written in the decrees of the Lord.

If they say there is a generational curse upon you, you stand your ground and say, ***"Father God I thank you that I cannot be cursed, because the Lord Jesus Christ redeemed me from my tribe, language, people and nation and he made me a king and priest for God. I refuse to be subjected under any curse because the blood of Jesus ransomed me. I command that every curse be broken off of my life right now in the name of Jesus."***

Politely, you can explain to the person who tells you that there is a generational curse upon you, that you are in Christ and your life is hidden in him. You were ransomed for God and you cannot be cursed. You can use your tongue to fight off the enemy. Indeed, many are the afflictions of the righteous but the Lord delivers him from all of them. We are expecting the devil to direct his wrath against us, but we are also expecting to walk in the victory that Christ obtained for us – not curses. There are no generational curses upon us, only the attempts of Satan to hold us captive again, which will prove to be futile, because greater is He who is in us.

When sickness comes upon you, you stand your ground and wage a good war saying,

"Father, it is a written decree of the Lord that, by the wounds of Jesus Christ I am healed – Isaiah 53:5 – and therefore I refuse to be subjected to any sickness. Christ redeemed me from sickness which was a curse of the Law by becoming a curse for me and this, Father, is another decree written in your word – Galatians 3:13. Father because of these decrees I stand against sickness and I curse all sickness in my body right now. I command it to die right now in the Name of Jesus. By the wounds of Jesus I am healed. Sickness you have no right and I command you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ to leave my body right now."

When somebody says that you will get flu, explain to them politely that Christ redeemed your from all sickness and disease. You are not going to get flu and there is no flu season for those who are in Christ because Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever. He heals your disease and there is no weapon formed against you that shall prosper. Again, we are expecting the devil to forge his deadliest weapons against us, but we are not expecting his weapons to prosper. Life and death are in the power of the tongue and we will not receive nor speak the words that will release sickness or death in our bodies. We only speak and receive the words of life.

When poverty tries to take advantage of you, you turn against it saying, ***"Father God thank you that the Lord Jesus Christ redeemed me from poverty because it is your will for me to prosper. Thank you for the written decree that the Lord Jesus Christ though he was rich, became poor so that through his poverty I might become rich – 2Corinthians 8:9, I am blessed with all spiritual blessing in Christ Jesus in the heavenly places – Ephesians 1:3, and father you are able to cause all grace to abound to me, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times I may abound in every good work that you purposed for my life – 2Corinthians 9:8. Now Father on the bases of these decrees from your word I curse poverty in my life. I refuse poverty in the name of Jesus Christ. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, I command the power of poverty to be broken right now and be reduced to nothing in my life. I declare that I am blessed and shall not be in lack in the name of Jesus."***

There are many other principles that you must observe and I will not take time to go to each of those. Those who teach the word will teach you about faith, giving, living right, repentance etc. which are the things also necessary for your deliverance. You can experience total victory in Christ, it is what Christ paid for. You have been redeemed by Christ and ransomed for God.

> **For freedom Christ has set you free, stand firm therefore, and not submit again to a yoke of slavery – Galatians 5:1 ESV**

Stand firm and resist your enemy. You were redeemed so that you may have the intimate relationship with God that he created you for. Do not deprive God of that relationship through allowing the law or the enemy to enslave you again. Do not indulge your flesh – wherein sin and corruption has been confined. Do not walk by what you feel or what seem to be real because of appearances. Believe the good news and walk by faith. Believe the word of God in spite of the situations, understanding that everything is temporal but the word of God abides forever. There is so much power in you that will lie dormant until you learn to release it. You have been delivered for God, now remain free for him.

Chapter Five

Salvation

But God being rich in mercy, and because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ – by grace you have been saved – and raised us up with him and seated us in him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your doing, this is a gift of God
– Ephesians 2:4-8 ESV

The theme of our salvation is love. "God being rich in mercy, and because of the great love with which he loved us." Love is the primary reason why God saved you. Everything else that comes to you after salvation comes in love, because first you have been loved and therefore saved by God's grace. God required none of your works in order to save you. You only had to believe that you have been forgiven through the sacrifice of the body of Christ, and acknowledge Jesus Christ as your Lord and his sacrifice as made for you, and in this way you appropriated the salvation that had already been offered to you freely.

Obtaining salvation does not require you to obey the Law, it requires you to believe the gospel. Salvation is one of the tremendous gifts that God has given to man. When you know and understand the price that God had to pay for this gift you would cherish it. The people who struggle with loving God or with understanding that God loves them dearly, are the people who are not learned in the message of the cross. These are the people who don't understand that they were ransomed through the blood of Jesus Christ, neither do they know who it is that died for them. They don't know how deep they were in sin and how totally depraved they were when Jesus took their sin and died for them. These are the people who still think that their works can contribute to their salvation.

Those who know the cross of Christ and what it accomplished have a solid relationship with God and they love him dearly because they understand that he loved them first. They are able to appreciate God and to praise him because they have counted even their good works as garbage that they may gain Christ, and be found in him having no righteousness of themselves, but the righteousness of God that is by faith in Christ Jesus. One of the most important things about salvation is to

understand why you were saved and that is why I opened this book with a chapter deliberating this question.

The second thing to understand is how God wrought your salvation. How did a vile, corrupt, God hating, immoral, and a totally depraved man become the righteousness of God? What happened to our corrupt old man? How did he die? Where did the corruption go?

What happened to the old man?

Do you not know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried with him therefore by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him, in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. – Romans 6:2-6 ESV

We know what happened to our old corrupt self. We know why we are experiencing liberty. We know the sacrifice that our Lord made so that we may be brought near to God. We are not trying to earn favor with God through our good works. Our good works are a result of the crucifixion of our old man and the newness of life that came with the new man. We were crucified with Christ so that the body of sin might be brought to nothing.

The old man was buried with Christ through baptism. The old man was corrupt and when he heard the good news of our salvation he couldn't take it. He died on the spot when we believed the gospel and turned to Christ. Now all that we have to do is take off his old practices and walk after the new man. We have crucified our flesh and its passions and we will no longer submit to the flesh.

"I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me" – Galatians 2:20 ESV

"And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires" – Galatians 5:24 ESV

Our sins were placed upon Christ on the cross.

"But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned – every one – to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all." – Isaiah 53:5-6 ESV

The chastisement that brought us peace was placed upon him. We are not spared because we have tried hard enough to be good and do well. We are spared because Christ was not spared. We are spared because we were not spared at all when the just requirement of the Law demanded our death. We died with Christ! We died to the Law through Christ's body. We owe nothing to sin or to the Law because of the cross of Christ.

> **"Likewise my brothers, you also have died to the Law through the body of Christ, so that you may belong to another, to him who has been raised from the dead, in order that we may bear fruit for God." – Romans 7:4 ESV**

Jesus Christ is the Lamb that took away our sins. Being sinless, on the cross he bore the sins of the world. He died condemned because we sinned and he took our sins. He became a curse for us. He took our sickness and disease and bore our grief. All that was supposed to come upon us came upon him on that cross so that we may be released from it all. We no longer owe it to sin or to the Law. We have been freed from the punishment because Christ took it for us. This he did because he loves us.

Righteousness – a tremendous gift

> **Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due. And to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness, just as David also speaks of the blessing of the one to whom God counts righteousness apart from works. – Romans 4:4-6ESV**

Righteousness is a gift that you receive when you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. If righteousness is a gift, then this means you cannot work for it. The above passage emphasizes the point that righteousness is a gift given to those who believe. The writer goes on to say that to the one who works, wages are not counted as a gift but as his due.

If your righteousness is a results of something that you do, then it is no longer a gift and it is no longer a righteousness from God but your own righteousness. But we who believe in Jesus Christ have received the righteousness of Christ as a gift from God. Christ took our sin, and **as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgression from us. – Psalm 103:12 (emphasis added)**. We are the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus.

Not understanding this simple truth can be a deadly peril. The Israelites erred in this and missed the salvation of God. They did not submit to the righteousness of God because they trusted the righteousness that comes by the Law. The righteousness that saves is a gift because salvation is a gift from God, not as a result of works so that nobody can boast (see Ephesian 2:8-9). Some of the Israelites couldn't understand this, just like some Christians today don't understand it.

> For I bear witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish their own, they do not submit to God's righteousness. For Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness to everyone who believes. – Romans 10:2-4 ESV

They failed to receive a gift of God because they pursued righteousness as if it were by works. They trust the works of the Law, not understanding that by the works of the Law nobody would be justified before God.

> What shall we say then? That the gentiles who did not pursue righteousness have attained to it, that is, a righteousness that is by faith, but that Israel who pursued a law that would lead to righteousness did not succeed in reaching that law. Why? Because they did not pursue it [righteousness] by faith, but as if it were based on works [of the Law]. They have stumbled over the stumbling stone – Romans 9:30-32 ESV

Trying to become righteous by observing the Law is folly. It only leads to self-righteousness and condemnation. We must receive the righteousness that is a gift from God because it is only that kind of righteousness that God delights upon. Let us look at a few more scriptures before I conclude this point.

> "Indeed, I count everything as loss for the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ, and be found in him, not having a <u>righteousness of my own</u> that comes from the Law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, <u>the righteousness from God that depends</u> on faith. – Philippians 3:8-9 ESV

> "You are severed from Christ you who would be justified by the Law; you have fallen away from grace." – Galatians 5:4 ESV

> "But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man's trespass, much more have <u>the grace</u> of God and <u>the free gift</u> by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many. And the free gift is not like the result of that one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but <u>the free gift</u> following many trespasses brought justification." –Romans 5:15-16 ESV

<u>Created in righteousness and holiness</u>

> "And to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness." – Ephesians 4:24 ESV

Your gift of righteousness is inalienable from your new man – your born again spirit. You are righteousness! God has created your new man in his likeness in true righteousness and holiness. You are perfect in your spirit! You don't have to do anything to be righteous because you are created righteous. Just like in Adam you were a sinner by nature, now in Christ you are righteousness by nature. That is why

when you live by the spirit you portray the attributes of God – the fruits of the Spirit. All that you have to do is learn how to put on the new man, and stop trying to be righteous in your flesh.

I will devote a chapter to teaching you how to put on and walk after the new man. This is one of the most important subjects after one is born again. You wrestle with sin until you give up if you are trying to be good by the flesh instead of learning to walk by the spirit. The verdict of God against the flesh is that the flesh must die, and he told you to kill it. We will discuss that later in this book.

We have been offered a tremendous gift by God. He has given us the righteousness and the holiness of his Son Jesus Christ. In order to receive this gift, we, like Paul, must count our own righteousness as rubbish in order to gain Christ. We are those who do not work but believe him who justifies the ungodly. We trust in Christ and we have found nothing good in ourselves worth the love, the forgiveness and the acceptance of God. Jesus Christ alone is our salvation. And so we have set our hope only in him and not in ourselves.

Chapter Six

Sovereignty

I believe that there is nothing worse that has happened to us, than the misunderstanding that the masses have, regarding the sovereignty of God. The misconception of this truth has slayed its tens of thousands and probably millions. When you misunderstand this doctrine, the Devil plays God in your life. He transforms himself into the angel of light and every tragedy that he brings into your life, will be attributed by you to God. This is one of the saddest things that has ever happened to believers. The proper name for this tragedy is "deception". This deception starts when people redefine the word sovereign to make it mean what it does not.

The Devil in disguise

"And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. So it is no surprise if his servants, also, disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Their end will correspond to their deeds." – 2Corinthians 11:14-15 ESV

Why does Satan disguise himself as an angel of light? He does so because he knows that people are prone to accept him when he come under this guise because an angel of light is believed to be good and to be from God. There are people who believe that you should never question God, and therefore if anything comes as from God, they will accept it without question. The Devil capitalizes a lot on this folly. He knows that we will willingly put up with anything that we believe was ordained for us by God and therefore, he cunningly masquerade himself as God or an angel from God.

If he can get us to believe that the bad things that are happening to us are orchestrated by God, then he knows that we will accept them without resistance. We will not fight him and we will pray wrong prayers because we will be thinking that God has been tempted by evil to tempt us. For as long as we are willing to put up with the things that the Devil inflict us with, we will have more of those afflictions because we have permitted the Devil to do these things to us thinking that this evil is from God.

The Devil is not stupid, he knows exactly what he is doing and he is well experienced in it. Our ignorance of the word of God furnishes him ground to come and persecute us. One of the lies that he has sold to the church that many people have bought is that God is sovereign and therefore nothing happens except what he wills or what he allows. Because of this filthy lie, God has been accused of

innumerable crimes that he didn't commit. He has been accused of murder or allowing it, allowing rape, abortion, poverty, and every other tragedy you can think of, the list is endless really, because people believe that none of these tragic things would have happened without God either willing it or allowing it. Do you wish to know whose works are these? They are the Devil's. Attributing them to God only empowers the Devil because he works perfectly in darkness, where he is not seen for who he truly is.

God's not guilty

Let me ask you just this one question, who allowed the Devil to have dominion in the world in the first place? Do you know what most people will answer to that? Without even thinking, they would say that it was God. They would probably blame God that Satan sinned and rebelled against God. Do you know why? Because the devil has told them a lie and they have believed it so much that every truth that comes to them has to merge with that lie.

There is nowhere in scripture where it is said that nothing happens but what God wills or allows. This is a blindfold put on people's eyes by the Devil to keep them from seeing the goodness of God. And sadly many Christians believe this. God did not allow the Devil to have dominion over the earth. He gave that dominion to Adam, and Adam surrendered his rights to the Devil. The scriptures are clear regarding what happened and how it happened and yet people still blame God for it.

The reason why there is all this corruption in the world that God created in perfection, is because the man who was given authority and governance over the earth traded it for nothing, and now God has to take the blame for it.
I have spoken to a lot of people who messed up their own lives, disobeying every command that God has laid down for them, and I have heard them blame God for the misfortunes that they brought to their own lives thinking they are smarter than God. They say that God controls everything that happens and yet it so clear that he does not control their lives, otherwise would they be doing the very things that they know very well that God hates? Even their conscience condemns them.

> **People ruin their lives by their own foolishness and then are angry at the Lord.**
> **– Proverbs 19:3 NLT**

God is not the author of death

> **"Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so sin spread to all men because all sinned." – Romans 5:12 ESV**

Sin came into the world through one man. That man was not God and God warned that man about sin and told him how it would produce death. God warned him

because he did not want him to sin. Sin has cost both God and us dearly. What God had to pay for our sin is infinitely more than what any of us has suffered. Why did God allow sin? So that he would later die because of it? God did not allow sin! Adam is not one of the many names of God. It is Adam who allowed sin and unleashed death into this world.

God did not mess up your life. There could be many reasons why your life is messed up but God is not one of them, I assure you. God is good all the time. God did not allow sickness into your body. God has put healing power within you (see Ephesians 1:19), and he has given you authority over all the power of the enemy (see Luke 10:19). By his wounds you are healed (see Isaiah 53:5), and you have the ability to heal the others as well (Mark 16:18).
How then can it be God's fault that you are sick? What did he do to allow sickness into your body? The Devil has deceived us into thinking that we are powerless over the things happening to us because they have been allowed by God or were orchestrated by God.

Death came into the world through sin and not through God. God is not up there killing people. Death is actually one of God's enemies (see 1Corinthians 15:54-57). The Lord Jesus Christ came that he might destroy the devil who has the power of death.

> **Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy him who has the power of death, that is, the devil. – Hebrews 2:14 ESV**

The Devil is the one who has the power of death not God. But the good news is that the Lord Jesus Christ has defeated Satan. What is this power of death that the devil has? We have our answer again from the scriptures that I have been quoting all along. How did death come into the world? It entered the world through sin. Sin is the power of Satan that yields death. But let me show you another scripture that attests to this.

> **"O death where is your victory? O death where is your sting [power]?" The sting of death is sin and the power of sin is the law.**
> **– 1Corinthians 15:55-56 ESV** (emphasis added)

The sting or the power of death is sin. Sin releases death and the power of sin is the law. In the previous chapters I have explained how God dealt with both sin and the law. This is how God disarmed the Devil and destroyed him who had the power of death. God is not guilty. Things don't just happen because they were allowed by him. All this mess we are in was not allowed by God.

God's will thwarted and rejected

I can quote scripture after scripture to show you that the will of God does not automatically come to pass and that many people have rejected it and thwarted it. There are many examples in scripture where God revealed his will for certain people but they rejected it and the purpose of God for their lives ended up not being fulfilled. Sovereignty does not mean that God controls everything. I have already deliberated the case of Adam. God's will for him was a perfect life free from controversy and suffering, but in disobedience to God he chose death after God had warned him.

The people of the nation of Israel are a classic example of this. God's will was to give them the land that he had promised to their forefathers. They did not pray and ask him to do it, but God himself remembered the promise that he had made to Abraham. So without a shred of doubt, God wanted them to possess that land more than they wanted to. But out of the people who were more than a million who left Egypt under the leadership of Moses, only two men entered the land and they too were subjected to a forty years delay that was not part of God's plan and will for them.

> **"For who were those who heard and yet rebelled? Was it not all those who left Egypt led by Moses? And with whom was he provoked for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness? And to whom did he swear that they would not enter his rest, but those who were disobedient? So we see that they were unable to enter because of unbelief. – Hebrews 3:16-19 ESV**

The scripture above is quoted from a passage where the author is warning us not to follow the example of these people because we too might miss out on God's will for our lives (see also 1Corinthins 10:1-13). If God controls everything then he would have controlled those people and cause them to enter the Promised Land, but they all died in the wilderness because they were not willing. They were unable to enter, not because it was God's will but because of their unbelief, and they died in the wilderness because of their disobedience.

Let us look at another example:

> **Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that art killing the prophets, and stoning those sent unto thee, how often did I will to gather thy children together, as a hen doth gather her own chickens under the wings, and ye did not will. Lo, left desolate to you is your house; – Matthew 23:37-38 YLT**

God's will for Jerusalem was to gather her children together but his will did not come to pass because Jerusalem was not willing. So the will of men triumphed over the will of God for their lives. They stoned those sent to them and killed the prophets. God did not try to help Jerusalem just once, but many times he tried but they wouldn't let him. He says, *"How often did I will…"* and this implies that he tried

more than once. Many times he willed to help Jerusalem but all those times Jerusalem refused the Lord and finally he says, *"Lo, left desolate to you is your house."*

King Saul

> **And Samuel said to Saul, "You have done foolishly. You have not kept the command of the Lord your God, with which he commanded you. For the Lord would have established your kingdom over Israel forever. But now your kingdom shall not continue. The Lord has sought out a man after his own heart, and the Lord has commanded him to be prince over his people, because you have not kept what the Lord commanded you" – 1Samuel 13:13-14 ESV**

The Lord's plan was to establish the kingdom of Saul over Israel forever, but because of Saul's disobedience and fear of men, God ended up having to take away the kingdom from Saul's house and giving it to another person. The person to whom the kingdom was given was David, and if you are a person who is familiar with the scriptures, you know that David was not a perfect man. He was a man who pursued the will of God for his life and obeyed God, a man whom when he had made a mistake would own up and was quick to repent.

Saul on the other hand, refused to take responsibilities for his own actions as a king and a leader of the people, instead he would blame the people that he was supposed to lead. He feared people more than he feared God and that was not a good character for a king. God's will was not going to prosper in his hand and therefore his office had to be taken by another.

We live under a different covenant from the covenant that Saul was under and the grace of God has been extended to us abundantly. But if we continue in disobedience, we too can miss God's will for our lives. Nobody is called to serve themselves, therefore if you are rebellious and messing up all the time, you are not only hurting yourself but the many lives that are tied to your destiny will suffer too. God therefore has to make other means to help the situation, but it is not without damage that this happens.

Let us look at one more example:

> **"Say to them, as I live, declares the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live; turn back, turn back from your evil ways, for why will you die, O house of Israel? – Ezekiel 33:11 ESV**
>
> **"Have I any pleasure in the death of the wicked, declares the Lord, and not rather that he should turn from his ways and live? – Ezekiel 18:23 ESV**

Just how many people die today in their sins and because of their sins? We cannot count the myriads of people who die because of their abuse of alcohol, and those who put their lives and the lives of others in jeopardy because of substance abuse.

We cannot count the number of children who grow up through hardship because their parents were either killed by drugs or alcohol. We do not fully realize the damage that has been afflicted to families by alcohol and drugs alone.

Should I go on to the damages that has been cause by sex out of wedlock? How many broken families have we produced through our disobedience? Just how much pain and suffering have we brought to the children that we brought into this world that we couldn't take good care of? In the end we blame God for all these things as if God did not warn us and as if we did not choose to disobey him.

God is not in control of all things

God does not control who you have sex with and he does not control when you will have sex with that person. This means he does not control how you have children, and when you have them, and with whom do you have them. God does not will that you will have sex before marriage but he cannot force you to obey him. God does not control what you drink and when you drink it. You choose to drink alcohol and you choose how much alcohol you will consume.
God does not want you to be wasted in alcohol, he does not want you to be wasted in drugs but he cannot control that unfortunately.

You can pray and ask God to help you find deliverance from sin or somebody might pray and ask God to intervene in your life, and God is willing to help if you are willing to let him. If you reject God's will for your life, God will not force it upon you. Sovereignty does not mean that God controls everything. There are things that God promised in his word, and he will see to it that he fulfills his promises, but if these promises include you, then you must be willing and obedient in order for those promises to come to pass. They won't come to pass automatically.

God's will and purpose must be pursued. It is not automatic.

The definition of sovereign:
Sovereign: *possessing supreme or ultimate power.* Or *a supreme ruler, especially a monarch.*

The definition of the word does not imply that God controls everything and nothing happens except for what he wills or allows. God knows things before they occur but that does not mean he controls or orchestrate those things.

Don't let the devil fool you into thinking that God does what he wants whenever he wants in your life. Pretty much of what happens in your life is what you allow to happen, either through ignorance or deliberately through disobedience, or willingly because of choice. Some other things just happen not because we brought them to ourselves but as persecutions from the Devil. Some still happen because we live in a

fallen world and a lot of people are still yielding to the Devil and therefore bringing curses through their obedience to the Devil.
But the promises of God give us assurance that we can come victoriously out of all tribulations. Do not lose heart therefore, you are more than a conqueror through Christ Jesus our Lord. Don't submit to the lie that God is responsible for all the pain in your life. Resist the Devil standing firm in the promises of God and he will flee from you.

Chapter Seven

Predestination

In him we have received an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will.
– Ephesians 1:11 ESV

The word predestined sets on an alarm to many believers because they tend to think that because our lives were predestined by God, therefore we will inevitably walk in the plan of God whether we consent to it or we don't. This is the same as misunderstanding the sovereignty of God. The fact that God had a plan for your life does not mean that you will automatically fulfill that plan and purpose. You still have to find out what God's plan for your life is and actively pursue it. And if you don't, it will not come to pass. God has planned your life according to his foreknowledge and he has a predetermined purpose for your life but this does not mean that it will automatically come to pass. You must actively pursue what you were destined for.

I feel a need to remind you now that the intention of this book is to help you break barriers between you and God. Therefore I cannot delve deeper into these subjects for the sake of argument but I will share just enough truth for you to have a good relationship and understanding of God.

There are people who think that it doesn't matter what you do, if you were destined for hell you will end up in hell because that is your destiny. This is inconsistent with love, and God is love. There are many scriptures – some of which I have already quoted – that show us clearly that the will of God is that nobody would perish but that all would be saved through faith in Jesus Christ. There is no sinner too sinful for the blood of Jesus. Everyone who comes to God will receive forgiveness and the free gift of righteousness and the Holy Spirit.

Am I denying that there are scriptures that speaks of people who were destined for destruction? No I don't. But I have a question for you, by whose will were they predestined for such? By their own will and through their own disobedience or by the will of God? The word of God cannot be broken. Let us look at the scriptures.

Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of <u>his will</u> – Ephesians 1:5 KJV

> **In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.**
> **– Ephesians 1:11 KJV**

Please stay with me here because I want us to unravel this through the scriptures. In the two scriptures, I have underlined the words "his will" and "his own will." The first scripture tells us that God predestined us unto adoption by Christ Jesus. These scriptures are for everyone who would choose to believe the Lord Jesus Christ and accept the gift of salvation. The way for them to become children has already been predetermined and they cannot established another one. Whoever believes, is grafted under people who were predestined for adoption to become children of God. This is in accordance with the good pleasure of his will – meaning that God delights in this, (salvation).

The second scripture tells us that God works all things after the counsel of his will. This means that God does not do things against the counsel of his will. For God to do it, it must be in harmony with his will. So predestination was done according to the pleasure of God's will. Now the question is, "What is the will of God regarding man?"

> **I exhort, then, first of all, there be made supplications, prayers, intercessions, thanksgiving, for all men: for kings, and all who are in authority, that a quiet and peaceable life we may lead in all piety and gravity, for this [is] right and acceptable before God our Saviour, who doth will all men to be saved, and to come to the full knowledge of the truth – 1Timothy 2:1-4 YLT**

God's will is that all men be save and come to the knowledge of truth. Everything that God does has to be in harmony with his will. God predestined therefore beforehand that everyone who believes will be saved and whoever does not believe is already condemned. This he did through our Lord Jesus Christ. God does not pick and choose who will be saved. He has already chosen. And this is how he chose:

> **For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.**
> **– John 3:16-18 KJV**

God chose that whosoever believes should not perish but have eternal life. Whoever then does not believe is already condemned. They have rejected the Saviour when they needed saving. God does not choose for anyone, people choose for themselves. God has predetermined that those who choose his Son will receive forgiveness through his Son, and those who reject him have rejected God. This is how he

predestined things to be. He didn't choose that one person will go to hell no matter what they do, and another will go to heaven no matter what they do. Those who believe are the elect. Anyone can choose to believe, and that is the very desire of God, that all would believe and be saved.

> **He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him. – John 3:36, KJV**

God is not rejecting people, it is people that are rejecting God's gift of salvation.

Foreknowledge

Here is another attribute of God that confuses a lot of people. God is omniscient – all knowing. He knows all things before they occur and he has never forgotten anything. There is nothing hidden from him. He knows absolutely everything. I mean he knows E-V-E-R-Y-T-H-I-N-G! Past, present and the future, he knows it altogether.
This does not mean however that he is responsible for everything that happens. He knows what you will do or how you will react but he does not make you do things or cause you to react outside of your will.

God knows your thoughts from afar, before you even conceive them he already knows what you will think. But this does not mean that God is responsible for your thoughts. He will not hinder your thoughts because he gave you free will – a right to decide for yourself. That comes with deciding which thoughts you will allow into your mind and which thoughts you will reject. The fact that God knows it doesn't mean he likes it or he allowed it. Man and Satan will violate your will. They will do things to you that you did not consent to because man and Satan are evil. But God is good and he abides by the laws that he set in place through his word.

Even if he knows something bad is about to happen to you because of the decision that you will make. He does not force you to take a different decision. He warns you however he can, and if in spite of all the warnings you proceed then you will get what's coming. If you are a person who has a close relationship with God, it becomes easy to hear him and if you know his word, it becomes easy to hear the Holy Spirit and to follow his guidance.

Omnipotence.

God is omnipotent – all powerful. He has supreme power and authority. But both is governed by the jurisdiction of his word. He will not act contrary to his word. He is not a covenant breaker.

> **My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips.**
> **– Psalm 89:34, KJV**

Being all powerful does not mean that God can stop anything bad from happening and therefore he must. The earth was given to man and it is man who has power on earth and if he needs God's help he must pray and ask for that help. But God is not going to take the responsibilities that he has given to man upon himself. If he does that, he will be working without his jurisdiction and God will not do that. He has exalted his word above all his name.

> **I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy loving-kindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name. – Psalm 138:2 KJV**

In closing:

My best advice to everyone is that you make every effort to learn the truth about God and learn his ways as much and as fast as you can. Ignorance is the devil's tool. Study your bible and avoid all that you can avoid in order to spend time with the word of God. This will save you a lot of trouble and your life will be transformed in a way that you have never imagined!

Don't make long unfruitful prayers. Pray with understanding that comes from the knowledge of God revealed in the scriptures. Don't entertain the arguments about God in your head but overthrow them with the knowledge of scripture. Do not live your life based on a truth about God that you have never confirmed through scripture. The fact that many people are saying it does not mean that it is right. Test everything through the scripture. If it is not in harmony with the grace and the love of God, if it does not conform to truth, reject it immediately. Lastly, if anyone teaches you anything about God, tell them to give you the scriptures that confirms what they are saying so that you can read them for yourself. The Devil is vicious, keep your eyes on the word of God so that you will see him clearly when he attacks.

Chapter Eight

Sons and beggars

In the kingdom of God there are sons who have become beggars. This is very sad because God never will receive his children as beggars, neither will he indulge them because he does not seek to promote this spirit of Satan. We have not received a Spirit who will subject us again to bondage, but a Spirit who is from God who liberates us and empowers us.

> **But as it is written, "what no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him" – These things God has revealed to us through his Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything even the depths of God. – 1Corinthians 2:9-10 ESV**

The sons have received the Spirit who is from God and the Spirit has revealed to the sons of God the secret things of God that no eye has seen, nor had any ear heard, things that have neither entered the heart of man. These are the things that God prepared for those who love him, and he has not hidden them from us. The same scripture continues to say:

> **"Now we have not receive the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand the things freely given us by God. – 1Corinthians 2:12 ESV**

The Spirit reveals to us the things that are freely given to us by God. The sons know that they have an inheritance, and they know that they have already received it in Christ Jesus. The sons of God are not supposed to beg him for things. They know what has been freely given to them. They have the Spirit of God and the Spirit makes known to them what sort of inheritance they have received in Christ. You cannot beg for what is already yours, especially when it has already been given to you, and if the person who gave it to you has made it known to you that they have given it.

The spirit of begging comes through laziness, which leads to ignorance, and ignorance leads to deception. A lot of believers are not living by the Spirit as the scriptures command. They are lazy to study and they are ignorant of the word of God and such people suffer the most from this spirit. These however, are not the only people who suffer from this spirit. Some have been taught wrong, and their knowledge keeps them in bondage. They have inherited deceiving spirits. These spirits are spread through teachings that are taught by Demons as Paul stated in his letter to Timothy, (see 1 Timothy 4:1) when he spoke of the dangers of the last days.

The wrong use of Prayer

Quite a lot of people use prayer as an opportunity to inform God of how bad things are in their lives and how they need his help. They approach the throne of grace as beggars and not as sons. When you hear them pray you get an impression that God is some king living in a far country who does not know what is happening to the people in his colony. God said that he knows what we need before we even ask for it and that he was pleased with giving us the kingdom. Those who are born of Christ have received the kingdom.

> **And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind. For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you. Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. – Luke 12:29-32 KJV**

The Lord Jesus advised that we do not pray and ask for the things that our Father knows that we need but that we ask for the kingdom because when the kingdom comes these things will be given to us. Prayer should be our way of seeking the kingdom of God, not an opportunity to beg. So now that we have already received the kingdom, then what do we pray for? I can begin quoting scriptures from the epistles of Paul showing you the things that he prayed for and the things that he advised us to pray for, but I want to live that to you. Find out what a person who has already received an inheritance prays for, it's in your bible.

The subject of prayer is vast and I am not expanding on it, but I am sharing this so that the misuse of prayer would stop. Praying wrong will kill your faith and cripple your relationship with God. You have to learn to pray aright. You don't have to keep informing God how bad your situation is, but you should use prayer to ask him how to overcome such situations and how to help others overcome.

All things

God has already given unto us all the things that we will ever need. When God created Adam, he created the supply before he created man. God anticipated every need that Adam would have and made a vast provision. Now it was upon man to find what he needed because it was already in the garden. It is the same today, the supply still exists before the need. There is no need to beg.

> **"His divine power has granted us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who has called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desires." – 2Peter 1:3-4 ESV**

The above scripture tells us that God has given unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness through the knowledge of Christ Jesus. It goes on to say that through the knowledge of Christ comes the knowledge of the great and very precious promises of God. And by these promises we are able to become the partakers of God's divine nature. So now we know that if we obtain this knowledge we will partake in the divine nature. Knowledge will afford us all that we need because it has been given to us through knowledge. What ought we to seek therefore? Knowledge!

Feeling unworthy?

These cruel spirits make you feel like you are an unworthy beggar through their lies and deception. If you ask me, yes we were unworthy! But that was before we got born again. We didn't deserve to receive anything from God but his wrath. But now let me ask you just this one question, "Do you still deserve the wrath of God?" Absolutely, No! You have been redeemed by Christ and you don't deserve the wrath of God because you have received God's forgiveness. But did you know that there are Christians who still beg God for forgiveness when they sin as if they don't know that Jesus died?

Are you a beggar? Are you supposing that your false humility pleases God? Are you supposing that begging makes you look humble and pleasing to God? Let me ask you this. If you have forgiven somebody their debt because you knew that they couldn't pay it, would you be pleased if they keep coming with tears begging you to forgive them their debt? Wouldn't you like them to just say thank you and never again keep on reminding you about the debt? God wants that too. He does not want you to be sin conscious. There's more to relationship than talking about past mistakes.

Some people cannot have a relationship with God because all they ever do is cry and beg before God. What kind of a son is that? "O God bring revival!" Yet they have the power to raise the dead, heal the sick, cast out demons that they have never used. They are the one's stopping the revival. It would be appropriate to ask God to teach you how to release the power that is already within you than to beg him to save people as if revival was withheld by God. God is not our enemy.

Unfaithful stewards

We are betrayed by the unfaithful stewards. The church is defeated because of the teachers who have been anointed by God to teach the word who have done so sluggishly. They have a responsibility to take people out of bondage, and until they give themselves wholly to doing that, people will continue to suffer. Many leaders keep on telling people that they are praying for them – which they should, but they were not commissioned to intercede for people. A clear command was, "Go into the

world and make disciples." Unless you begin to teach diligently, all you will make is converts and not disciples. How do you make disciples when you ask people to only attend once or twice a week? What kind of school is that? Surely we can do better than that.

> **And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen. – Matthew 28:18-20 KJV**

God has anointed us to teach, and that anointing makes a whole lot of a difference. People have not been equipped to teach themselves, that responsibility is upon the teachers. We have been anointed and given power to do that, and if we don't do our work with diligence, then we are the reason why there are more beggars than sons.

> **"And the Lord said, "Who then is the faithful and wise manager, who his master would set over his household, to give them their food at the proper time? Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes." – Luke 12:42-43 ESV**

We are stewards of God's grace. We are the servants of the people for Christ's sake (see 2Corinthians 4:5). We are accountable for the sheep of God. We are the ones who knows the times at which they must eat. The above scripture says that it is the wise manager who gives food at the proper time. It will be strange to discover that the proper time for food would be just three hours on Sunday once every week.
I don't mean to be critical of my fellow ministers. I know how inconvenient things can get and I know that we cannot always have our way. But as ministers commissioned to build up the Body of Christ, it ought to be our goal to do everything to the best of our ability to produce disciples. Let it be at least our goal to teach consistently, especially now that the time is short.

I must admit that I have seen some of the very diligent teachers getting discouraged because the people they were putting all the efforts for, just didn't show up in the classes. I know how discouraging that can be, but that should not compel us to quit. If all you make is one disciple, because you have only one among your flock that shows up, then make that one disciple with all diligence and leave the rest to the Lord. Keep the school open and show up always to teach. You have a duty and an obligation if you are called.

The prodigal son

The Lord Jesus Christ told the story of a prodigal son who took his inheritance and went to a far country and spent it all foolishly (see Luke 15:11-32). The man eventually became poor and became a beggar after all that he had was spent. Later

on, he remembered that his father was a wealthy man and that his father's servants were treated good and they were paid better. He decided that he will go to his father and ask to be a servant because he no longer felt worthy to be a son.

> **"I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Treat me as one of your hired servants." – Luke 15:18-19 ESV**

Notice the wording here. The son did not say, "I am no longer your son," but he rather said, "I am no longer worthy to be called your son." This shows very well that he still understood that he was a son. The very fact that he calls him father and not master, shows that he knows that he is still a son. But now he asks to be "treated" as a hired servant because he feels unworthy.
There are many today, who, like the prodigal son, are feeling unworthy and therefore expect to be treated as servants. Because they are expecting to be treated like hired servants then they act like one. They come before God with begging and much weeping instead of thanksgiving and rejoicing. Sometimes their feeling of unworthiness is tied to some sin that they have committed that God has forgiven, but they just can't get over it because Satan keeps accusing them in their heart, holding them through their past, and they think that God is feeling the same way about them.

Child of God, you are dearly loved and your Father will never treat you like a beggar. He paid a dear price for you. He redeemed you for himself. You belong to him and you are not a beggar. You are a rightful heir through Christ and with Christ. Return to your rightful position. The reason why your prayers seem to be reaching a dead end is because you are begging for what is already in you.

The inheritance

> **In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will – Ephesians 1:11, KJV**

> **Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance IN the saints. – Ephesians 1:15-18**

The inheritance is in the saints. The inheritance is in you. It is within you but it works by knowledge. If there's anything you should be hungry for and ask for from God relentlessly, is that he gives you knowledge and revelation to the mystery. Pray that he helps you read the right books, listen to right messages and find a teaching

church that will teach you his will. Pray that he quickens your understanding so that you may know him better. Take this same prayer quoted above and pray it for yourself.

The key that unlocks what is inside of you is the knowledge of Christ. Know Christ! Grow in the knowledge of Him and you will never struggle with anything. Christ is the wisdom of God for us. In Christ are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (see Colossians 2:3). There are treasures in Christ that you don't even know about, things that will delight and bless your weary soul. God loves you and he wants you to live a life of victory. That is why he has given you all that you need in Christ. Christ is like the Garden of Eden, when you leave the garden you cannot enjoy the fruits within. But if you stay in the garden and search, you will find delicacies and rest for your soul. Focus on Christ.

Chapter Nine

Walking after the new man – Spirit

"And to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness." – Ephesians 4:24 ESV

God has created you anew in your spirit and he has put there everything that you will ever need to live a godly and a victorious life. He has perfected you through the blood of his Son and has created you in true righteousness and holiness. All you have to do now to enjoy all that has been put within you, is to renew your mind and live by the spirit. Live by who you have been created to be in Christ. I believe that all that this book is teaching is how to live by faith and walking by the spirit.

A struggle with God

A lot of people are struggling because they are fighting against sin, and while they are at it, they are also trying to win God's approval. They battle against the wicked thoughts that they hate but don't know how to get rid of. They struggle with temptation that seem to be so stronger than them, and very often they have to come before God weeping, asking for forgiveness and help because they have been overcome by temptation and sinned again.

I have lived that kind of life and I know how painful it is to love God and still be defeated by sin. Immediately after being born again I devoted my life to Christ. I read my bible and prayed every day. God called me to ministry immediately and asked me to quit my job and I responded to the call. Well I didn't quit my job but I was dismissed unfairly and I knew I had to go to ministry. I read Christian books and I was growing in knowledge, but the struggle didn't go away. I was preaching, healing the sick and casting out demons but deep within me the struggle was growing. The struggle with sin ended up being a struggle with God. My relationship with God was slowly replaced by the struggle. Eventually miracles ceased and I quit preaching and went to find a job and the struggle between me and God got worse.

There is nothing that you can do to be delivered from this kind of struggle except learning the truth. What sets you free from the struggle is knowing the truth. I know that this sounds too good to be true, and if feels like there is something missing in what I am saying. Well there is nothing missing in this. Knowing the truth really brings freedom to them that believe and live by the truth of God's word.

If the truth that you already know has not set you free from the struggle with sin or with God, then you need to learn more truth, and maybe unlearn some of what you consider to be truth that isn't setting you at liberty.

> **"So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." ..Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin...**
> **– John 8:31-32; 34 ESV**

The Lord Jesus Christ told the Jews who believed him that they had to be disciples and abide in his word in order to be set free. Free from what? Everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin, and therefore needs deliverance. What can deliver a person who has already believed in Jesus Christ from sin? The Lord Jesus Christ said that it is knowing the truth that sets a believer free from sin.

Wrong emphasis

A lot of people put emphasis on actions and that is how they put themselves under a trap. Your actions are inconsistent because they are influenced by your habits – automatic behaviors. It is possible to believe right and still act wrong. And very often it happen with newly converted Christians, and sometimes even with those who have been saved for a long time.

The reason why we were delivered from the law and were given a command to serve God in a new way was because the law focused on actions. The Law put emphasis on doing and that is what defeats man. There are evil practices that you have been accustomed with for a very long time and these have become your habits and/or philosophy. These are strongholds that you cannot overthrow in one day. You cannot renew your entire philosophy in one day.

Habits

A habit: *is an automatic pattern of behavior in reaction to a specific situation; may be inherited or acquired through frequent repetition*

This is a dictionary definition of the word habit. This says that a habit is an automatic pattern of behavior. Something that is automatic happens on its own and the word *pattern* denotes that it is recurrent – it keeps happening. There are behaviors/actions that you may be still subjected to, not because it is how you choose to live, but because they are in your system and they are automatic. To get rid of these behaviors you must take time saturating and immersing yourself in the word of God and practicing what it says, do this until these new practices become your new habits – automatic behaviors. Deprogram and reprogram yourself through the word of God.

There is something that I call auto-suggestion that fuels your behavior. Most of your action are taken without careful consideration, they are just automatic. Your mindset/philosophy gives you auto suggestion and auto-suggestion determines how you respond, be it in word or deed.

Philosophy/Mindset

A philosophy: *is a mindset or a system of beliefs immersed in one's subconscious mind.*
A mindset: *is a habitual or characteristic mental attitude that determines how you will interpret and respond to situations.*

Before you respond to things and situations, you have to analyze them – filter them through your beliefs system. Your philosophy is a system of beliefs and it filters everything that comes in form of knowledge and determines how you should respond. Your philosophy is a defense mechanism and it rejects everything that is not in harmony with all your beliefs. If you have accepted wrong beliefs then you have a wrong mentality and you will act according to who you are in your beliefs – in your heart. When you act contrary to your beliefs, your conscience rise up against you and condemn you to keep you from acting that way again.

If you want to change how you respond to situations therefore, you must change your beliefs system. You must get rid of the worldly mindset through installing a godly one. Without changing the mindset you can never change your automatic response. You are how you think. Change how you think and automatically your actions will change. Actions cannot change until the mind has been changed. Renew your mind.

Change takes time

Behavioral change takes time because you cannot change the output without changing the input. You have to allow the word of God to change your beliefs and values. You must allow it to change your priorities. You must destroy the strongholds of the devil in your mind – the wrong beliefs you have accepted, and it is not going to happen overnight. While you are working on changing the output through changing the input, you will grow hate over your old actions and feel guilty for acting according to the patterns of your old-self. This is good. It shows that you are now beginning to change, keep working.

Sometimes you will be so displeased that you will start feeling like God is condemning you for what you have done. That is not God. That is either your conscience or the Devil accusing you in your heart. If you do not understand the truths I have been sharing in the previous chapters you will fall right into the devil's

trap and begin thinking that God is angry and displeased with you. God knows that changing your actions will take time and that is why he seeks worshipers who will worship him in spirit and in truth.

Worshipping in spirit and in truth

"But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him."
– John 4:23 ESV

Worshipping God in spirit means that you worship him on the bases of who he has created you to be in your spirit. Remember that your spirit man has been created in true righteousness and holiness (Ephesians 4:24), therefore, worshipping God in spirit is worshipping him in true righteousness and holiness. You must see yourself as God sees you and not judge yourself according to your failures or your successes. Worshipping God in spirit is worshipping God based on who he has created you to be, and not who you have made yourself to be or who you have failed to make yourself to be.

Worshipping God in spirit not only excludes your boasting on how good you have become, but it also excludes whining and feeling sorry for yourself and sobbing before God for who you have failed to become. God has already approved of you in Christ Jesus because of your faith in him. God is pleased with you because you believe in his Son. Those who are in the flesh –counting their own good or bad works– cannot please God.

Believing in Christ gives you his righteousness and his holiness – the righteousness and holiness in which you were created in him. In your spirit you are new creation (2Corinthians 5:17), and you stand before God, holy and blameless because of your faith not your actions.

> **"And you who were once alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his body of flesh <u>by his death in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him, if indeed you continue in the faith</u>, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I Paul became a minister."**
> **– Colossians 1:21-23 ESV**

This scripture is praising the work of the cross of Christ not your own works. God has reconciled you to himself through the death of Christ, and he did this in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him. He already has succeeded in doing this. This is not something that God will achieve in the future, no. Christ has already died and it is through his death that God has achieved this. It's done. You are holy and blameless and above reproach before God.

This is true of you, only if you continue believing what you heard – the gospel of Christ! It is not based on your actions. It is God's achievement, not your achievement. In your spirit you are perfect. Worship God on the bases of that!

Worshipping God in truth means worshipping God based on what his word says about you, not how you feel or what you think about yourself. The word of God is truth (John 17:17) and it is the standard by which we ought to live. According to the word of God you have been made perfect forever through the sacrifice of Christ.

> **"For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified."**
> **– Hebrews 10:14 ESV**

Your spirit

In your spirit is the Spirit of God. Not only is your spirit created in true righteousness and holiness, in addition to that, your spirit is joined to the Lord. Your spirit is entwined with the Spirit of God so much that you are literally one with the Lord in your spirit.

Yes, you are one with the Holy Spirit. To illustrate this point, I once used water that was in two separate containers and poured them in one basin. I asked the person who had poured water with me in this basin to take the water that he poured and leave the water that was poured by me in the basin. Of course he couldn't because that water had become one. You too are one with the Lord in your Spirit. You have the mind of Christ (1Corinthians 2:16), and you are identical to Christ (1John 4:17). This is true only of your spirit, and not of your soul and body yet. When Christ appears as we await him, then this will be true also of your soul and body.

> **"Beloved we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is."**
> **– 1John 3:2 ESV**

Meanwhile, you have to live and walk by the part of you that is already perfect. While your mind (soul) is being renewed, you are commanded to walk by the spirit. But how can you walk after something you have never seen, nor touched, neither understands? It is impossible to live by the spirit unless you know first what the spirit is like. How can you know what your spirit is like?

In the first chapter of this book I did define in minute details what your spirit is composed of, and I spoke of each part's functions. That was just foundational knowledge about the spirit of every man. Your spirit, however, though structured in the same way, is capable of infinitely more things than the spirit that is not born again. As I said when I opened this chapter, your spirit is filled with the Holy Spirit. You are actually one with the Lord in your spirit.

"But he who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him."
– 1Corinthians 6:17 ESV

This union comes with quite a lot that sets you apart from everyone who is not born again. Your spirit is different from their dead spirit. Yours is created in true righteousness and holiness and theirs is dead. From your spirit flows the life of God – from the Holy Spirit who is therein. How do I know all these differences when I haven't seen either your spirit or a spirit of man who is not born again? Well I would not have known if I had not seen your spirit. I know all this because I have seen your spirit. If you are born again, it is like mine, and if you are not, it is dead – separated from the life of God and alive to the Devil.

A window to your spirit

The good news is that you too can see your spirit. Allow me to show you how. This is imperative because living a life of victory as a Christian depends on living by the spirit. Therefore it is essential that you know your spirit so that you can walk after it. Failure to do so will result in great frustration and a never ending struggle with sin and eventually with God.

For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. – James 1:23-24 ESV

The word of God is a mirror through which you see what is in you, that which cannot be perceived by the body senses or emotion of the soul. The Word of God shows you who you are in your new spirit. And because in your new spirit you are identical to the Lord and are one and inseparable with the Spirit of the Lord, then whatever you see of the Lord is true also of you. The Apostle James likens studying the word of God to looking at yourself in the mirror. He goes on to say that if you hear the word and then not do it you are deceiving yourself.

"For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like."

- Hearing the word of God is – looking at the mirror
    - Word = Mirror

- Not doing the word is – turning away from the mirror
    - Devaluing or despising the word

- Forgetting what he was like is – deception that comes thereafter
    - Satan steals the word from your heart

Transformation

Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we all with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit. - 2Corinthians 3:17-18 ESV

When we behold the glory of the Lord we are transformed into the same image of glory from one degree to another. Why is that? This is because when we see the Lord we see the prototype after which we are made in our spirit. The more we see him is the more we know of him, and the more we know of him is the more we know of ourselves because we are one spirit with him and are created to be like him and reflect his glory. We begin to live by what we know, and because faith comes by hearing the word of God (Romans 10:17) then we begin to live by faith.

And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one – John 17:22, KJV

The Lord Jesus gave us his glory and we are only able to walk in that glory to the degree that we are aware of it. Our knowledge limits us. Your knowledge of Christ determines how much you will reflect of his glory. Your ignorance determines how much ground has been furnished to Satan to plant his deceptive lies. This is why studying the word of God is so important. Becoming a disciple and abiding in the word is absolutely imperative. What you don't know is holding you back and keeping you stagnant.

Conclusion

To walk after the sprit you must renew your mind and fix your heart and attention on knowing Christ. Live by the truth from the word of God and not by what you feel or by your physical circumstances. Study the word of God and value it. Your heart will change and eventually your circumstances will change. This subject will continue in the next chapter.

Chapter Ten

Set your mind aright

For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot.

Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the spirit of Christ does not belong to him. But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. If the Spirit is of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you

– Romans 8:5-11 ESV

The struggle between you and God comes from the frustrations caused your mind. I assure you that God is not guilty of the many crimes with which he has been charged. He has given us all that we need and he is always there to guide us where we need guidance and help us where we need help. The biggest enemy and hindrance of our success is our mind. If you can set you mind aright, there is no telling how much you will achieve in your Christian walk. The key to living by the spirit is setting your mind in the things of the Spirit. What are the things of the Spirit?

The things of the Spirit are the things written in the word of God about the nature of your new man. They are the truths that the scriptures reveal about Christ. They are the things that please God, and we know that without faith it is impossible to please God. These are the things that you need to set your mind upon and meditate upon until your mind has been completely changed by them. Walking by the spirit is bombarding your mind with the word of God and practicing it with great obsession. In order to walk by the spirit you must pull away from the garbage of this world and saturate your mind in the word of God.

Seek the knowledge of God as if it was hidden treasure and dig for it like it was gold. Give yourself no rest in seeking after the knowledge of Christ and live by the knowledge you have obtained. The scriptures are sufficient to make you perfect.

The new you

After learning the truth about your born again spirit you cannot help but love the new you. I mean, the new you is awesome and nothing is impossible for the new you. All you have to do is learn more everyday about who you have been created to be in your new spirit. In our spirit is the same mighty strength that God exerted when he raised Jesus from the dead (see Ephesians 1:19-20). But that power cannot be released just through your spirit alone. Your spirit on its own cannot do anything in the earth realm. You need your body in order to release this power. Now the issue lies with the channel through which the power passes from your spirit to your body in order to be released.

Practical examples

Let me try to explain this in a more practical way using scriptures to elaborate. There are promises in the book of Mark 16 for all believers concerning the power of God vested in every believer. Let me use those as example.

> **"And these signs will accompany those who believe: in my name they will cast out demons, they will speak in new tongues, they will pick up serpents with their hands, and if they drink any deadly poison it will not hurt them; they will lay their hands on the sick and they will recover." – Mark 16:17-18 ESV**

These are the things that you are now capable of doing as a believer. These are the abilities that come with your new birth. Your born again spirit has power to do all these things. But like I said, the spirit cannot do anything by itself. Let us look at a few of these signs under the light of this truth.

- **In my name they will cast out demons.**

Your spirit is always wielding its power but it has to be channeled through the soul to your body before it can be released. For as long as you are silent you cannot cast out demons. You need your mouth to speak, and without a mouth that can actually speak and command spirits in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, you cannot cast them out unfortunately. You can resist them but you cannot cast them out.
Your mouth does not have a problem with commanding demons provided that your soul is willing to channel the power. The mouth may cooperate and yet find that the soul is refusing to channel the power. Your soul is made of 3 parts as I mentioned on the first chapter of this book; Will, emotions and mind. The part that plays a major role in hindering power from being released from your spirit is your mind and your will. So you see that the spirit may be releasing power but the soul may block it.

- **They will speak in new tongues**

If you have been baptized in the Holy Spirit then you have an ability to speak in tongues. Your spirit knows how to do it but it cannot do it without the cooperation of your mind, your will and your body. When you speak in tongues, your mind is

unfruitful and therefore it doesn't enjoy much the process of praying in tongues, because praying in tongues defy logic. Your mind will keep telling you to stop because it fears what it doesn't understand. Therefore, your mind again can block channeling of this power.

- **They will lay their hands on the sick and they will recover**

Your new spirit has power to heal the sick but again it cannot just heal the sick without the cooperation of the mind and body. The soul stands in the middle as a channel of power from spirit to the body. Once the power is in the body then releasing it is no longer an issue. But if the mind thinks that laying hands on the sick and expecting them to recover is absurd, then forget about the power. The soul has refused to be used as a channel.

The mind reasons the power of God away every time the power tries to flow through it. It cannot participate until it believes in what it is asked to do. The mind is the major hindrance and it sways the will too. This is because the mind is not born again and in that mind are still old patterns of thinking that need to be changed through the word of God

There is no shortage of power

While a lot of Christians are praying for the power of God to come and raise the dead and perform mighty miracles and bring revival, in the Body of Christ there is no shortage of power, even in the least and the sorriest of the saints. The spirit of an average Christians is filled with so much power that even one Christian can start revival if that power can be released. The least of the saints in the new covenant is greater than all the prophets of old. The least of the saints has the Holy Spirit dwelling in him and has better promises than the greatest prophet of the Old Testament – John the Baptist.

> **Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. – Matthew 11:11, KJV**

When you look at the Apostle Paul's prayer for the believers in his letter to Ephesus, you will realize that there is no shortage of power, but there is a shortage of revelation knowledge and spiritual wisdom. The Apostle didn't pray for these believers to receive more power, but he prayed that their eyes may be enlightened to what they already had. The Apostle wrote:

> **Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him... – Ephesians 1:15-17 KJV**

I have been in quite a couple of prayer meetings but sadly I have never heard any pastor making these same prayer points. They are always asking God to do more, to help those in need, to heal those who are sick, to save more people etc. without acknowledging what they have. Let us continue looking at the Apostle Paul's prayer.

> **"...The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places**
>
> **– Ephesians 1:18-20 KJV**

The Apostle Paul prayed that the eyes of the saints may be enlightened so that they may know the hope of Christ's calling. Today if you would ask a pastor, "what is the hope of Christ's calling?" you would be blessed if you get the right answer. I am not trying to criticize pastors but I am trying to establish a point that, we do not acknowledge what we have, we are obsessed with getting what we think we don't have. People will go on a fast, asking God for power and yet the power is in them. We really need to change our prayer points.

...and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints

Again, the Apostle Paul prayed that the saints may know what the riches of the glory of the inheritance of Christ that is already in the saints are. There is an inheritance on each of the saints that they have received in Christ. The saints don't know what they have and as a result they are praying wrong prayers, asking for the things that are already in them.

... And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe

We need to be enlightened to know the exceeding greatness of his power to us who are believing. There is absolutely no shortage of power but there is exceedingly great power available to you, and there is an inheritance that is in you that you simply need to know how rich it is. What we need is not power but enlightenment.

Where are we missing it?

Somebody may ask, "If the power is really in us, then how come we are sick? How come we have laid the hands on the sick and they still died? How come we are still poor? How come we are failing to bring revival?" These are very good questions to ask. They express doubt from a stand point of a person who has tried but didn't get the right results. The very fact that you have tried to lay hands on the sick hoping that they will be healed, means you are aware of the power of God but you just don't know how to release it. You believe that the power is there but you are frustrated

because it doesn't seem to work for you. I know exactly how you feel. Well, the power works through faith. Through knowledge, the righteous shall be delivered. The Lord Jesus Christ taught his disciples to release power, and we all must learn before we can actively release it. We must become students of these supernatural experiences, as the Lord's first disciples were.

The enemy is not make belief – He's real

"Behold I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you" – Luke 10:19 ESV

When the saints become aware of their identity in Christ, and become aware of the power and the authority that they have in Christ, they reverse the binoculars and shrink the enemy to a size that he is not. In simple language, being enlightened to the power they have makes them have a twisted view of Satan and they begin to underestimate him or just forget about him. It is true that we have authority over all the power of the enemy, but note in that very same phrase the words, "the power of the enemy."

These words are suggesting that the enemy still has power. Whenever you wield your great power against him, he can still use his power to counterattack you and that is what he does. The greatest power of the Devil is deception. This means that the Devil attacks your mind, the very thing you need to release the power that is within you. I have already mentioned that the pipeline through which the power flows from your spirit is your soul (will, mind and emotions), it is no wonder therefore that this will be the very thing that the enemy tries to destroy.

He hurls in doubts and lies and vain imaginations to deceive you so that the power pipeline will be blocked by these. There is a way to clear the pipeline but it has to be something that one does constantly and relentlessly because the enemy is constantly bombarding the pipeline through his weapons. You need to take cover and work on clearing the pipeline. Abide in Christ where the enemy can't rich you. Take time and allow the Lord Holy Spirit to help you renew your mind.

Renew your mind

"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect." – Romans 12:2 ESV

God is not your problem. Your own mind is your problem and God has already given you a solution to that. You can be transformed into the same image of Christ if you renew your mind through the word of God. It is as simple as it sounds! But remember that you have the enemy who will see to it that you fail in doing this

because he knows that if you become more and more like the Lord Jesus Christ he will lose his dominion, not only over your life but over many others.

The bible tells us that;

> **"...God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him."**
> **– Acts 10:38 ESV**

The devil cannot let you become like Christ without trying to stop you because of what the Lord Jesus did through his ministry. If you are transformed to the same image of Christ then that means bad news for Satan's kingdom, so he will try to stop you. The good news is that he is not more powerful than you are and if you would resist him firm in your faith he will flee from you. Submit yourself to the teaching of the word and resist anything the devil throws at you in order to disturb you. Expect to win! But not without a fight.

The word of God is a seed and the more seeds you plant, the more chances you stand of having great harvest. And what is best about this seed is that it is incorruptible. Spend more time planting the word of God in your heart and before you even know it, your life will be transformed. Place high value on the word of God. Esteem it highly and make it preeminent in your life and you will see wonders.

Chapter Eleven

God is Love

"Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love." – 1John 4:7-8 ESV

The greatest challenge that I have ever faced in my entire life has been to speak about God and to speak for God in a way that I know that he is. God is love. It is so hard to communicate this truth and yet it should be in everything that we say about God, because Love is what and who God is. We cannot talk about God and reveal hate or negligence or destructive criticism etc. because that is inconsistent with the character of love. Love is a mystery that is revealed through the preaching of the gospel of Christ. In order for us to walk in love, we have to know God and whoever does not love does not know God, but the one who loves is born of God and knows God.

Being born of God may be a common trait to all believers, but if our knowledge of the Son of God differs, then our walk of faith will differ too. You can tell people from morning until evening that they must love one another, if they are not born of God and if they don't know God they cannot walk in love because they do not know what love is. We love because God loved us first – 1John 4:19. It is the revelation of God's love that teaches us to love one another, and if we have failed to see the love of God in our own lives, directed to us, then we cannot love the others.

We cannot love them when we don't think that God loves them. If we are waiting to feel that God loves us, then we are waiting for a bus in a train station. We perceive by what God has done for us in Christ that God loves us, not by feelings. We assure ourselves by his word. If Jesus dying for your sins does not show you how much God loves you, then you have not understood the message of the cross and you don't know who it is that died for your sins.

In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.
– 1 John 4:9-11, KJV

One of the things that blind us from seeing the love of God is the law. I know that maybe you must be thinking that I really hate the law, but I don't. I love the law

when it is used properly for what it was intended for. But to establish my point, that the law keeps us from seeing the love of God, let us look at what the scriptures say.

The Law brings wrath

For the Law brings wrath, but where there is no Law there is no transgression
– Romans 4:15 ESV

The Law brings wrath. And that is why when we look at how God dealt with people under the Old Testament we see him as cruel. Looking at all those people who were killed for breaking the Law and those who were cursed, we can't help but wonder, if God did this to them then what would he do to us? We begin to fear God with an unholy fear, a fear that has torment (see 1John 4:18).

But the truth is, God did not bring wrath! The Law brought wrath, not God. There is nowhere in scripture where you will find it being said that God is the Law or that God is wrath. But there are scriptures that say, "God is love" or "God loves" or "God loved." Love is consistent with the nature of God, but wrath is not. Mercy is consistent with the character of God and unforgiveness isn't.

The Law prescribed a punishment for the transgressor of the Law. And the Son of God himself took that punishment on the cross for us. The wrath that was supposed to fall upon the law breakers was placed upon the sinless Christ, and Christ redeemed us from the curses of the law (Galatians 3:13). Christ took away the Law and thus took away the wrath for those who believe. Those who look at the law without looking at Christ first, who is the end of the Law for righteousness to everyone who believes (Romans 10:4), cannot see the love of God, because they are covered by a veil that lies in their hearts.

> **"But their minds were hardened. For to this very day, when they read the old covenant, the veil remains unlifted, because only through Christ is it taken away. Yes, to this very day whenever Moses is read a veil lies over their heart. But when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed. – 2Corinthians 3:14-16 ESV**

Whenever one tries to see God through the eyes of the law, they fail to see him because of the veil that lies in their heart. A person who is looking through the veil, either cannot see or they don't see clearly. But when the veil is removed you are able to see everything as it is. Christ removes the veil that was brought by the law. When the law was introduced, it came with the veil which was symbolic that this was not who God really is, but God was still to be revealed in Christ.

The Suffering of the Christ

I have not found a better way of communicating the love of God with people, than pointing them to the cross, to behold the bleeding Savior, whose appearance is

marred beyond human semblance, and whose form is beyond that of the children of mankind.

> **As many were astonied at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men – Isaiah 52:14 KJV**

> **"But God show his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. – Romans 5:8 ESV**

Dying for another person's sins is not an easy thing to endure, especially if the person you are laying down your life for is the one condemning you to death. Dying for the sins of a person who hates you and doesn't hide it. A person who thinks you deserve to die a cruel painful death of shame is really not easy to die for. Laying down your life for such a person when you have all the help that you can use to save yourself and destroy all your enemies at once is not an easy thing. Choosing death instead of help because you love someone is the greatest expression of love.

Jesus loved the very people who hated him and were shouting, "Crucify him!" He died for the people who had rejected him. They were not giving him any comfort as he hung on that cross. They were hurling insults at him, cursing and mocking him. He suffered to the point of death for such people. God loved us when we were sinners and sent his Son to die for our sins. It was not a quick death. It was painful and the mockers were not making it easy.

> **And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided him, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God. And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar, And saying, If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself. – Luke 23:35-37 KJV**

Love

> **"...he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him. He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief, and as one from whom men hide their faces, he was despised, and we esteemed him not." – Isaiah 53:2-3 ESV**

To fully appreciate what is happening to the Lord Jesus Christ as portrayed in this passage, one must first understand who it was that was now despised and rejected by man. This was not just an ordinary man. This was Almighty God, the Creator of all things, and the Son of the Most High God, the heir of all things. This is he who was worshipped by angels and yet evil men despised him and esteemed him not. The very people he came to help were the ones who despised him and conspired to kill him. But even when he was hanging on that cross, he still prayed for them,

"Father forgive them for they know not what they do" (see Luke 23:34). That was love!

He had no form or majesty and there was no beauty in him that men would desire him. He was a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief. People gave him a hard time and yet it was for their sake that he had come. He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him – John 1:11. Yet the Son of God did not turn his back on us when rejected because of us and when he was rejected by us. In love, he hoped and endured the cross, despising its shame. He loved us too much to let us perish. He himself bore our sins on the cross.

There is nothing that you can do today to motivate God to love you more than he already does, and there is nothing that you can do to motivate God to love you less. God loved you when you were still a sinner and gave himself for you to die for your sins. You cannot now through your good deeds earn his love and favor. God's love and favor has already been poured out to you in abundance through Christ. There is nothing good withheld from you. All the promises of God are yes and amen in Christ.

If you really believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died for you, then I don't understand how you can doubt that God will answer your prayers, that he wants you to prosper, that he wants you to be in good health, and that he will get you out of whatever bad situation you are in. Dying for you was the hardest thing that the Son of God had to go through and yet he did not betray you when he was in severe pain. Why would he betray you now when he is in glory? He did not betray you when you belonged to the Devil and were a sinner by nature, how can he betray you now when you are born again and created in true righteousness and holiness? God does not love you less now. You are dearly loved.

"Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his love for his friends."
– John 15:13 ESV

There can be no greater expression of love than what God did through Christ. God loved you and sought after you when you were just living your life like the devil, doing evil deeds. God loved you in spite of your deeds. God's love for you is not tied to anything that you do.

Ending the struggle

The struggle between you and God ends the moment you understand and accept that God loves you in spite of you. He loves you dearly and now that you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and are a rightful heir with Christ, God is pleased with you and has already made wonderful plans for you in this life and in the life hereafter. God is not your enemy but he is your Father. It does not matter what your mind tells

you, if it is contrary to what I am saying here, then your mind is wrong and you need to renew it with the truth from the word of God.

If God saved you through the sacrifice of Christ, then what in the world do you think God will withhold from you? Why would you think that God is being mean towards you? Why wouldn't God heal you when Jesus took those lashes on his back so that through them you may be healed? How can God withhold from you something that he has already given you through Christ? If you are born again, then you are a child of God and your Father is the greatest King ever lived. You are a royal child, stop living like a beggar. Through Christ you have received eternal peace with God by grace. God is not angry at you.

God took an oath

Let me close this book by this wonderful Scripture text:

> **"This is like the days of Noah to me: as I swore that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth, so I have sworn that I will not be angry with you, and will not rebuke you. For the mountains may depart and hills be removed, but my steadfast love shall not depart from you and my covenant of peace shall not be removed," says the Lord who has compassion on you. – Isaiah 54:9-10 ESV**

There really isn't a need for God to take an oath because he honors his word. Even if it was not under oath, whatever God has said, he will stand by. He has exalted his word above his name. But when God is about to say something that he knows will be hard to believe, he says it under oath or say it again and again so that people finally understands that he really means it. Read again the scripture I quoted above. God bless you.